# The Interdependence of Literature

Georgina Pell Curtis

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"There is first, the literature of knowledge, and secondly the literature of power. The function of the first is to teach, the function or the second is to move; the first is a rudder, the second an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the mere discursive understanding, the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always through affections of pleasure and sympathy."
Thomas De Quincey "Essays on the Poets." (Alexander Pope.)

# PREFACE.

The author has endeavored in these pages to sketch, in outline, a subject that has not, as far as she knows, been treated as an exclusive work by the schoolmen.

Written more in the narrative style than as a textbook, it is intended to awaken interest in the subject of the interdependence of the literatures of all ages and peoples; and with the hope that a larger and more exhaustive account of a very fascinating subject may some day be published.

Chicago, Ill., June, 1916.

# ANCIENT BABYLONIAN AND EARLY HEBREW.

From the misty ages of bygone centuries to the present day there has been a gradual interlinking of the literatures of different countries. From the Orient to the Occident, from Europe to America, this slow weaving of the thoughts, tastes and beliefs of people of widely different races has been going on, and forms, indeed, a history by itself.

The forerunner and prophet of subsequent Christian literature is the Hebrew. It is not, however, the first complete written literature, as it was supposed to be until a few years ago.

The oldest Semitic texts reach back to the time of Anemurabi, who was contemporaneous with Abraham, five hundred years before Moses. These Semites possessed a literature and script which they largely borrowed from the older non−Semitic races in the localities where the posterity of Thare and Abraham settled.

Recent researches in Assyria, Egypt and Babylonia has brought this older literature and civilization to light; a literature from which the Hebrews themselves largely drew. Three thousand years before Abraham emigrated from Chaldea there were sacred poems in the East not unlike the psalms of David, as well as heroic poetry describing the creation, and written in nearly the same order as the Pentateuch of Moses.

The story of the Deluge, and other incidents recorded in the Old Testament, together with numerous legends, were known and treasured by the Ancients as sacred traditions from the earliest ages of the world.

We learn from St. Paul that "Moses was skilled in all the knowledge of the Egyptians." He must therefore have been familiar not only with the ancient poems and sacred writings, but also with the scientific, historical, legal and didactic literature of the times, from which, no doubt, he borrowed all that was best in the Mosiac Code that he drew up for the Chosen People of God. This old literature Moses confirmed and purified, even as Christ at a later period, confirmed and elevated all that was best in the Hebrew belief. Hence from these Oriental scholars we learn that the Hebrew was only one of several languages which enjoyed at different times a development of the highest culture and polish, although the teaching of the old Rabbis was that the Bible was the first set of historical and religious books to be written. Such was the current belief for many ages; and while this view of the Scriptures is now known to be untrue, they are, in fact, the most ancient and complete writings now in existence, although the discovery in Jerusalem, thirty−five or forty years ago, of the inscriptions of Siloe, take us back about eight hundred years before Christ; but these Siloeian inscriptions are not complete examples of literature.

"The Ancient culture of the East," says Professor A. H. Sayce, "was pre−eminently a literary one. We have learned that long before the day of Moses, or even Abraham, there were books and libraries, readers and writers; that schools existed in which all the arts and sciences of the day were taught, and that even a postal service had been organized from one end of Western Asia to the other. The world into which the Hebrew patriarchs were born, and of which the book of Genesis tells us, was permeated with a literary culture whose roots went back to an antiquity of which, but a short time ago, we could not have dreamed. There were books in Egypt and Babylonia long before the Pentateuch was written; the Mosaic age was in fact an age of a widely extended literary activity, and the Pentateuch was one of the latest fruits of long centuries of literary growth."

There is no doubt that these discoveries of modern times have been a distinct gain to Christianity, as well as to the older Hebrew literature, for it confirms (if confirmation is needed), the history of the creation, to find it was believed by the ancient peoples, whom we have seen were a learned and cultivated race.

In the present day the great College of St. Etienne in Jerusalem, founded by the Dominicans expressly for the study of the Scriptures, carries on a never ending and widely extended perusal of the subject. Parties of students are taken over the Holy Places to study the inscriptions and evidences of Christianity, and the most learned and brilliant members of the Order are engaged in research and study that fits them to combat the errors of the Higher Criticism. Their work, which is of a very superior order, has attracted attention among scholars of every country in Europe.

In the ancient development of the world there came a time when there was danger of truth being corrupted and mingled with fable among those who did not follow the guidance of God, as did Abraham and the patriarchs; then the great lawgiver, Moses, was given the divine commission to make a written record of the creation of the world and of man and to transmit it to later ages; and because he was thus commanded and inspired by God, his

literature represents the most perfect and trustworthy expression of the primitive revelations. From the very beginning, therefore, we trace this interdependence of literature. Moses, authorized by God, turns to all that is best in the older Babylonian, Egyptian and Indic literature, and uses it to regenerate and uplift the Hebrew race, so that we see the things contained in the Bible remained the same truths that God had been teaching from the beginning of time. The older Egyptian and Babylonian literature became lost to the world for thousands of years until in the nineteenth century modern research in the Pyramids and elsewhere, brought it to light; but the Hebrew literature was passed down to the Christian era, and thence to our own times, intact. It excels in beauty, comprehensiveness, and a true religious spirit, any other writing prior to the advent of Christ. Its poetry, which ranges from the most extreme simplicity and clearness, to the loftiest majesty of expression, depicts the pastoral life of the Patriarchs, the marvellous history of the Hebrew nation, the beautiful scenery in which they lived and moved, the stately ceremonial of their liturgy, and the promise of a Messiah. Its chief strength and charm is that it personifies inanimate objects, as in the sixty−fourth Psalm, where David says:

"The beautiful places of the wilderness shall grow fat; and the hills shall be girded about with joy. The rams of the flock are clothed, and the vales shall abound with corn they shall shout, yea they shall sing a hymn."

And again in the seventeenth Psalm, he says:

He bowed the Heavens and came down . . . and He flew upon the wings of the winds . . . He made darkness His covert, His pavilion round about Him: dark waters in the clouds of the air."

In time the Hebrew language began to be influenced by others, although, as a people, they rank with the Greeks and Spaniards as being very little moulded by any outside influence on their literature. From the time of Abraham to the age of Moses the old stock was changed by the intermarriage of some of their race with the Egyptians and Arabians. During this period their literature was influenced by Zoroaster, and by the Platonist and Pythagorean schools. This is especially noticeable in the work of Philo of Alexandria, who was born a few years B.C.

Josephus, who first saw the light in A.D. 37; and Numenius, who lived in the second century, were Jews, who as such remained, while adopting Greek philosophy. The learned writings of the Rabbis became known as Rabbinical literature. It is written in a language that has its roots in the Hebrew and Chaldaic; though it has also borrowed largely from the Arabian, Greek and Latin. In the sixteenth century Christian scholars began to make an extensive study of Hebrew and Rabbinical literature, and they were not slow to discover the value of these Oriental works. These writings, however, are subject to change, and it is in the Bible alone that we find the fundamental teaching of Hebrew literature. Differing entirely from the Mythological and Oriental Nations, it taught, as its cardinal principle, the unity of God. Its historical worth has been recognized by the greatest scholars in all ages, and it has influenced not only the ancient world, but also the literature and poetry of the Middle Ages and of modern times. It forms a contrast to the philosophy of the Greeks, and to that of Europeans of a later age. When the latter have tried to explain the great mystery of God and man, they have invariably failed. In the beautiful writings of the Greeks, wherein we find the height of artistic expression and polish, there is a subsequent gradual decline; but such is not the case in the Old Testament. In every age fresh beauty and hidden treasure is found in its pages. Another phase of the Bible which has had a far reaching and lasting effect upon all language and literature, is its prevailing spirit of types and symbols. This is conspicuous both in the poetical books and in those that are didactic or historical. It has had the same influence on the thoughts and imagination of all Christian people and upon the poetry and imitative arts of the Middle Ages (and nearly the same upon later and more cultivated times) that Homer had upon the Ancients. For in it we find the standard of all our Christian images and figures, and it gives us a model of imitation that is far more beautiful in itself, and far more world−wide in its application than anything we can borrow from the Greeks. We see this in Dante and Tasso, and in other Christian poets. To the Hebrew, as the original custodians of the Old Testament, we are indebted for keeping the faith pure when all other nations either forgot or abandoned it, or else mixed it up with errors and idolatry. What Moses records of the creation of the world and the first ten Fathers, is embodied by the Persians, Indians and Chinese in whole volumes of mythology, and surrounded by a host of fanciful traditions. Thus we see in the Hebrew as the chosen people of God, a nation able to preserve its literature intact through captivity, dispersion and persecution, for a period of four thousand years.

# SANSKRIT.

Sanskrit has only recently become known to Europe through the researches of English and German Oriental scholars. It is now acknowledged to be the auxiliary and foundation of all civilized speech, and is important as being the language of an extensive literature which records the life of a wonderful people from a remote age nearly to the present time.

The ancient home of the Aryan, or Indo−European race, was in Central Asia, whence many of its people migrated to the West, and became the founders of the Persian, Greek and Roman Nations, besides settling in Spain and England. Other offshoots of the original Aryans took their lives in their hands and penetrated the passes of the Himalayas, spreading all over India. Wherever they went, they seem to have held themselves superior to the aboriginal people whom they found in possession of the soil.

"The history of civilization," says a well−known authority on literature, "is everywhere the history of the Aryan race. The forefathers of the Greek and Roman, of the Englishman and the Hindu, dwelt together in India, spoke the same language, and worshipped the same gods. The languages of Europe and India are merely different forms of the original Aryan speech. This is especially true of the words of common family life. Father, Mother, brother, sister and widow, are substantially the same in most of the Aryan languages whether spoken on the banks of the Ganges, the Tiber or the Thames. The word daughter, which occurs in nearly all of them, is derived from the Sanskrit word signifying to draw milk, and preserves the memory of the time when the daughter was the little milkmaid in the primitive Aryan household."

The Hindu language is founded on the Sanskrit, of which we may name the books of the Vedas, 1500 B.C.

All the poetical works of Asia, China and Japan are taken almost entirely from the Hindu, while in Southern Russia the meagre literature of the Kalmucks is borrowed entirely from the same source. The Ramayana, or great Hindu poem, must have had its origin in the history−to−be of Christ. It has been translated into Italian and published in Paris. The Hitopadesa, a collection of fables and apologues, has been translated into more languages than any book except the Bible. It has found its way all over the civilized world, and is the model of the fables of all countries.

The dramas of Kalidasa, the Hindu Shakespeare, contain many episodes borrowed from the great Epic poems. The Messenger Cloud of this poet is not surpassed by any European writer of verse. The Ramayon and the Mahabharata are the two great Epic poems of India, and they exceed in conception and magnitude any of the Epic poems in the world, surpassing the Iliad, the Odyssey and the Jerusalem Delivered. The Ramayon, of seven Cantos, has twenty−five thousand verses, and the hero, Rama, in his wanderings and misfortunes, is not unlike Ulysses. The Mahabharata records the doings of gods, giants, and heroes, who are all fighting against each other. It contains two hundred thousand verses, embodied in eighteen Cantos, and is thought to be not the work of one man; but different songs sung from the earliest ages by the people, and gradually blended into one poem. In it we find the ancient traditions which nearly all people possess, of a more free, active and primitive state of nature, whose world of greatness and heroism has been suppressed in later ages. Among the Hindustans there exists a religion resembling in part that of Greece, with traces of the Egyptian; and yet containing in itself many ideas, both moral and philosophical, which in spite of dissimilarity in detail, is evidently akin to our doctrines of the Christian religion. In fact, the resemblance between the Hindu and Christian religion is so remarkable that some scholars think the Hindu was taken from the Christian. It is more probable that it was of greater antiquity, and that the similarity between them springs from the seed of all truth and all Nature implanted in man by God. Indian and Christian both teach regeneration. In the Indian creed, as soon as the soul is touched with the love of divine things it is supposed to drop its life of sin and become "new born."

In a higher region all these truths in the lower world which have to do with divine things, are mysteriously akin to each other. It needs only the first spark of light from above to make them instinct with life.

The Recluses or Gymnosophists of India are not unlike the first Recluses of Egypt, and the first hermits of the desert in the Christian era.

The doctrines of India first obtained a foothold in Europe through the dogma of Metempsychosis. It was introduced into the Hellenes by Pythagoras; but never became popular among the Greeks. This Metempsychosis

(or the transmigration of souls) was believed by the Indians from the earliest period, and their whole history is built upon it. A very ancient connection can be traced between India and Egypt, manifested by Castes, which are found equally in both countries, and by similiar Mythologies. When Alexander the Great invaded Northern India from Persia, the Greeks found an Indian Mythology far more like their own than the Persian or Hebrew. They thought they had met with the same gods they had been accustomed to worship, though clothed in a different form and color. They showed their faith in this discovery by the names of the Indian Hercules and the Indian Bacchus, later so common among them.

The worship of Vishnoo and Krishnoo in Hindostan differs very little from the religion of Buddha and Fo which was established in China and Thibet during the first century of Christianity. The former retained caste, while the latter, following the teaching of Buddha, have repudiated any class distinctions.

Decimal cyphers originated in Hindostan.

# PERSIAN.

In everything appertaining to their religious belief the Persians bear a close resemblance to the Hebrew, but the poetical part of their mythology is more similiar to the Northern theology, while their manners bear a strong resemblance to the Germans. The spiritual worship of nature, light, fire, and of other pure elements, is embodied in both the Zend Avesta (Persian) and the Edda (Scandinavian). The two nations have the same opinion concerning spirits which rule and fill nature, and this has given rise to poetical fancies about giants, dwarfs and other beings, found equally in Persian and Northern Sagas.

The work of Lokman, existing now only in Arabic, has caused some people to think that it is of Arabian origin; but it is really Persian, and of the tenth century B.C. His Apologues are considered the foundation on which Greek fable was reared. The Code of Zoroaster, in which the two great principles of the world are represented by Ormuzd (goodness and light), and Ahriman (darkness and sin) are as old as the creation.

Ormuzd is worshiped in the sun, the stars, and in fire. Zoroaster explained the history of man as being one long contest between these two powers until a time to come when Ormuzd would be victorious over Ahriman. Ormuzd, as the ruler of the universe, seeks to draw men to the light, to dispel the darkness of ignorance, and to extend the triumph of virtue over the material and spiritual world. It may be said of the Persians, as Tertullian said of the Roman Pagans, "that in their highest moods and beliefs they were naturally Christian." Among a Persian sect called the Sufis' there is a belief that nothing exists absolutely but God; that the human soul is an emanation from His essence, and will ultimately be restored to Him, and that the supreme object of life should be a daily approach to the eternal spirit, so as to form as perfect a union with the divine nature as possible. How nearly this belief approaches the Christian doctrine, will be easily seen.

Persian poetry is nearly all in the form of love stories, of which the "Misfortunes of Mejnoun and Leila" represent the Eastern Romeo and Juliet, and may have been known to Shakespeare in the writing of his own drama.

# EGYPTIAN.

Egypt shared with ancient Babylon and Assyria in the civilization of its primitive literature. It is from five of its Pyramids, opened in 1881, that valuable writings have been brought to light that carry us back one thousand years before the time of Moses.

Their famous "Book of the Dead,"of which many copies are found in our museums of antiquities, is one instance of their older civilization. These copies of the original, in the form of scrolls, are some of them over a hundred feet long, and are decorated with elaborate pictures and ornamentation. The book gives conclusive proof of the teaching of the Egyptians of a life beyond this. Their belief in the journey of the soul after death to the Underworld, before it is admitted to the Hall of Osiris, or the abode of light, is akin to the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory and Heaven. The Egyptian literature is painted or engraved on monuments, written on papyrus, and buried in tombs, or under the ruins of temples, hence, as has been said elsewhere, much of it remained hidden until nineteenth century research brought it to light. Even at the present time many inscriptions are still undeciphered.

Geometry originated with the Egyptians, and their knowledge of hydrostatics and mechanics (shown in the building of the Pyramids), and of astronomy and medicine, is of remotest antiquity. The Greeks borrowed largely from them, and then became in turn their teacher. The Egyptian priests, from the earliest age, must have preserved the annals of their country; but they were destroyed by Cambyses (500 B.C.), who burned the temples where they were stored.

In the fourth century B.C., Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great, who left it under the rule of the Ptolemies. The next century after the Alexandrian age the philosophy and literature of Athens was transferred to Alexandria. The Alexandrian library, completed by Ptolemy Philadelphus, in the third century before Christ, was formed for the most part of Greek books and it also had Greek librarians; so that in the learning and philosophy of Alexandria at this time, the Eastern and Western systems were combined. During the first century of the Christian era Egypt passed from the control of the Greek Kings to that of the Roman Emperors, under whom it continued to flourish. In the seventh century the country was conquered by the Saracens, who burned the great Alexandrian library. Following them came the Arabian Princes, who protected literature, and revived the Alexandrian schools, establishing also other seats of learning. But in the thirteenth century the Turks conquered Egypt, and all its literary glory henceforth departed. It has had no further development, and no influence in shaping the literature of foreign nations. What it might have been if the literary treasures of Egypt had not been destroyed by Cambyses and the Saracens, we can only guess. Great literary monuments must have been lost, which would shed more light on the civilization of the ancient world.

# GREEK.

A modern writer says of the Greeks:

"All that could beautify the meagre, harmonize the incongruous, enliven the dull, or convert the crude material of metaphysics into an elegant department of literature, belongs to the Greeks themselves, for they are preeminently the 'nation of beauty.' Endowed with profound sensibility and a lively imagination, surrounded by all the circumstances that could aid in perfecting the physical and intellectual powers, the Greeks early acquired that essential literary and artistic character which produced their art and literature."

Whatever the Greeks learned or borrowed from others, by the skill with which they improved, and the purposes to which they applied it, became henceforth altogether their own. If they were under any obligation to those who had lived before them for some few ideas and hints, the great whole of their intellectual refinement was undoubtedly the work of their own genius; for the Greeks are the only people who may be said in almost every instance to have given birth to their own literature. Their creations stand almost entirely detached from the previous culture of other nations. At the same time it is possible to trace a thread running back to remote antiquity, to show that their first hints of a literature came from Asia. Their oldest traditions and poems have many points of resemblance to the most ancient remains of the Asiatic nations. Some writers say that "this amounts to nothing more than a few scattered hints or mutilated recollections, and may all be referred to the common origin of mankind, and the necessary influence of that district of the world in which mental improvement of our species was first considered as an object of general concern." But this proves at least that there was an older civilization and literature than the Greeks, and that that civilization had its root in the East. According to their own testimony the Greeks derived their alphabet from the Phoenicians, and the first principles of architecture, mathematical science, detached ideas of philosophy, as well as many of the useful arts of life, they learned from the Egyptians, or from the earliest inhabitants of Asia.

The essential characteristic of the Greeks as a nation was the development of their own idea, their departure from whatever original tradition they may have had, and their far−reaching influence on all subsequent literature throughout the world. They differed in this from all other nations; for to quote again:

"the literature of India,with its great antiquity, its language, which is full of expression, sweetness of tone, and regularity of structure, and which rivals the most perfect of those western tongues to which it bears such a resemblance, with all its richness of imagery and its treasures of thought, has hitherto been void of any influence on the development of general literature. China contributed still less, Persia and Arabia were alike isolated until they were brought in contact with the European mind through the Crusaders, and the Moorish Empire in Spain."

This independence and originality of Greek literature is due in some measure to the freedom of their institutions from caste; but another and more powerful cause was that, unlike the Oriental nations, the Greeks for a long time kept no correct record of their transactions in war or peace. This absence of authentic history made their literature become what it is. By the purely imaginary character of its poetry, and the freedom it enjoyed from the trammels of particular truths, it acquired a quality which led Aristotle to consider poetry as more philosophical than history.

The Homeric poems are in a great measure the fountainhead from which the refinement of the Ancients was derived. The history of the Iliad and the Odyssey represent a state of society warlike it is true, but governed by intellectual, literary and artistic power. Philosophy was early cultivated by the Greeks, who first among all nations distinguished it from religion and mythology.

Socrates is the founder of the philosophy that is still recognized in the civilized world. He left no writings behind him; but by means of lectures, that included question and answer, his system, known as the dialectics, has come down to us.

Aesop, who lived 572 B.C., was the author of some fables which have been translated into nearly every language in the world, and have served as a model for all subsequent writings of the same kind. In 322 B.C., the centre of learning owing to the conquests of Alexander the Great, was moved to Egypt in the city that bears his name. Here the first three Ptolemies founded a magnificent library where the literary men of the age were supported by endowments. The second Ptolemy had the native annals of Egypt and Judea translated into Greek,

and he procured from the Sanhedrim of Jerusalem the first part of the Sacred Scriptures, which was later completed and published in Greek for the use of the Jews at Alexandria. This translation was known as the Septuagint, or version of the Seventy; and is said to have exercised a more lasting influence on the civilized world than any book that has ever appeared in a new language. We are indebted to the Ptolemies for preserving to our times all the best specimens of Greek literature that have come down to us.

# THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE GREEK FATHERS.

The interdependence of Greek literature includes some reference to the Greek fathers and their writings.

Many of the books of the Old Testament, regarded as canonical by the Catholic Church; but known as the Apochrypha among non−Catholics, were written in Greek. A number of them are historical, and of great value as illustrating the spirit and thought of the age to which they refer. The other class of writers includes the work of Christian authors. Greek and Latin writings wholly different from Pagan literature, began to appear soon after the first century, and their purifying and ennobling influence was more and more felt as time passed. The primitive Christians held these writings of the Greek and Latin fathers in great esteem, and in the second and third centuries Christianity counted among its champions many distinguished scholars and philosophers, particularly among the Greeks. Their writings, biblical, controversial, doctrinal, historical and homiletical, covered the whole arena of literature.

Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and John Chrysostom are only a few of the brilliant names among Greek and Latin writers, who added a lasting glory to literature and the Church.

# ROMAN.

To the Roman belongs the second place in the classic literature of antiquity. The original tribes that inhabited Italy, the Etruscans, the Sabines, the Umbrians and the Vituli had no literature, and it was not until the conquest of Tarentum in 272 B.C. that the Greeks began to exercise a strong influence on the Roman mind and taste; but Rome had, properly speaking, no literature until the conclusion of the first Punic war in 241 B.C.

This tendency to imitate the Greek was somewhat modified by Roman national pride. We catch sight of this spirit in Virgil and Horace, in Cicero and Caesar. The graceful softening of language and art among the imaginative Greeks, becomes in the Romans austere power and majesty, with a tendency to express greatness by size. These early indications of race characteristics never died out, as we may see by the contrast between the Apollo Belvidere of the Greeks, and the Moses of Michelangelo. The oldest existing example of Latin or Roman literature is the sacred chant of the Frates Arvales. These latter composed a college of Priests whose prescribed duty was to offer prayers for abundant harvests. This took place in the spring, in solemn dances and processions, not unlike the Bacchic festivals of the Greeks, although the Roman dances took place in the temple with closed doors. The dance was called the tripudium from its having three rhythmical beats. The inscription of this litany of the Frates was discovered in Rome in 1778, and experts have agreed that the monument belongs to the reign of Heliogabalus, 218 A.D. It is said to contain the very words used by the priests in the earliest times.

"Most of the old literary monuments in Rome," says a modern writer, "were written in Saturnian verse, the oldest measure used by the Latin poets. It was probably derived from the Etruscans, and until Ennius introduced the heroic hexameter the strains of the Italian bards flowed in this metre. The structure of the Saturnian is very simple, and its rhythmical arrangement is found in the poetry of every age and country. Macaulay adduces as an example of this measure, the following line from the well−known nursery song:

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'The queen was in her parlor,
 Eating bread and honey.'
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From this species of verse, which probably prevailed among the natives of Provence (the Roman Provencia) and into which at a later period, rhyme was introduced as an embellishment, the Troubadours derived the metre of their ballad poetry, and thence introduced it into the rest of Europe."

Literature with the Romans was not of spontaneous growth; it was chiefly due to the influence of the Etruscans, who were their early teachers, they lacked that delicate fancy and imagination that made the Greeks, even before they emerged from a state of barbarism, a poetical people. The first written literature of the Romans was in the form of history, in which they excelled. Like other nations, they had oral compositions in verse long before they possessed any written literature. The exploits of heroes were recited and celebrated by the bards of Rome as they were among the Northern nations. Yet these lays were so despised by the Romans that we can scarcely see any trace of their existence except in certain relics which have been borrowed from true poetry and converted into the half fabulous history of the infant ages of Rome. That the Romans, as a people, had no great national drama, and that their poems never became the groundwork of a later polished literature was due to the incorporation of foreigners into their nation who took little interest in the traditions of their earlier achievements. Father Ennius (239−169 B.C.), as Horace calls him, was the true founder of Latin poetry. He enriched the Latin language, gave it new scope and power; and paid particular attention to its grammatical form. What he has done was so well done, that it has never been undone, although later ages added new improvements to the language. In fable Rome was an imitator of Greece; but nevertheless Phaedrus (16 A.D.) struck out a new line for himself, and became both a moral instructor and a political satirist. Celsus, who lived in the reign of Tiberius, was the author of a work on medicine which is used as a textbook even in the present advanced state of medical science.

The Greek belief in destiny becomes in the Romans stoicism. This doctrine, found in the writings of Seneca, and in the tragedies attributed to him, led to the probability that he was their author. Seneca has had many admirers and imitators in modern times. The French school of tragic poets took him for their model.

Corneille and Racine seem to consider his works real tragedy.

Cicero's philosophical writings are invaluable in order to understand the minds of those who came after him. Not only all Roman philosophy of the time; but a great part of that of the Middle Ages was Greek philosophy filtered through Latin, and mostly founded on that of Cicero. But of all the Roman creations, the most original was jurisprudence. The framework they took from Athens; but the complete fabric was the work of their own hands. It was first developed between the consulate of Cicero and the death of Trajan (180 years), and finally carried to completion under Hadrian. This system was of such a high order that the Romans have handed it down to the whole of modern Europe, and traces of Roman law can be found in the legal formulas of the entire civilized world.

After the fall of the Western Empire these laws had little force until the twelfth century, when Irnerius, a German lawyer, who had lived in Constantinople, opened a school at Bologna, and thus brought about a revival in the West of Roman civil law. Students came to this school from all parts of Europe, and through them Roman jurisprudence was carried into, and took root in foreign countries. By common consent the invention of satire is attributed to the Romans. The originator of the name was Ennius; but the true exponent of Roman satire was Lucilius, who lived 148−102 B.C. His writings mark a distinct era in Roman literature and filled no less than thirty volumes, some fragments of which remain. After his death there was a decline in satire until fifty years later, when Horace and Juvenal gave it a new impetus, although their style was different from that of Lucilius. Doctor Johnson was such an admirer of the two finest of Juvenal's satires that he took pains to imitate them.

Boethius, the last of the Roman philosophers, left a work "on the Consolations of Philosophy," which is known in all modern languages. A translation was made into Anglo−Saxon by King Alfred in 900 A.D. Virgil (70−19 B.C.) has taken Homer as his model in his great national poem of the Aeneid. In many passages it is an imitation of the Iliad and the Odyssey. In his didactic poems, known as the Bucolics, Virgil has made use of Theocritus, while in the Georgics he has chosen Hesiod as his model. The later didactic poets of all ages have imitated Virgil, particularly in England, where Thomson's Seasons is a thoroughly Virgilian poem. It is easy to see in Virgil where borrowed methods end and native strength begins; for, in spite of being close imitators of the Greek, there is a character peculiar to the writers of Rome by means of which they have acquired an appearance of dignity and worthiness all their own.

# HEROIC POETRY.

The traditions of all nations go back to an age of heroes. Nature, also, has had her time of stupendous greatness, a period of great revolutions in nature, of which we can see traces to this day; and of huge animals, whose bones are still being dug up. The history of civilization also has its period of great achievements, and poetry has had its time of the wonderful and gigantic. In numerous heroic poems of different nations we can trace the unity of all heroic personages, as in the Iliad and the Odyssey of Greece, the Sagas of the North in the Nibelungen−lied, and the Ramayon of the Orient. Freedom, greatness and heroism are embodied in these poems, and many of them breathe a martial spirit.

We find the same character, however touched by local color, in all these beautiful traditions of whatever nation or clime; at the zenith of success, in the spring−time of youth and hope, on the very eve of joy unutterable, there often seizes on the soul of man an overwhelming sense of the hollowness and fleetingness of life. It is this touch of the spiritual which raises these old heroic poems to such sublime beauty and power. Poetry of this kind implies a nation, one which is still, or has been, great; one which has a past, a legendary history, vivid recollections, and an original and poetical manner of thought, as well as a clearly defined mythology.

Poetry of this order—lyric as well as epic—is much more the child of nature than of art. These great mythological poems for hundreds of years were never written; but were committed to memory, sung by the bards, and handed down from one generation to another until in time they were merged, after the Christian era, into the historical heroic poems. These in turn were the origin of the chivalrous poetry which is peculiar to Christian Europe, and has produced such remarkable effect on the national spirit of the noblest inhabitants of the world. Nor has this oral poetry entirely died out. In the present day Mr. Stephen Gwynne has astonished the world by telling of how he heard aged peasants in Kerry reciting the classics of Irish−Gaelic literature, legendary poems and histories that had descended from father to son by oral tradition; and the same phenomena was found by Mr. Alexander Carmichael among the Gaelic peasants in the Scottish Highlands and surrounding islands. It has been said that heroic poetry is of the people, and that dramatic poetry is the production of city and society; and cannot exist unless it has a great metropolis to be the central point of its development, and it is only by the study of the literature of all nations that we see how essentially these heroic poems were the foundation of all that followed them in later ages.

# SCANDINAVIAN.

The Scandinavian Nation held, during the Middle Ages, the first and strongest influence over the poetry and thought of Western Europe. The oldest and purest remains of the poets of German Nations are contained in the Scandinavian Edda. Its mythology is founded on Polytheism; but through it, as through the religion of all nations of the world, there is a faint gleam of the one Supreme God, of infinite power, knowledge and wisdom, whose greatness and justice could not be represented in the form of ordinary man. Such was the God of the Pagan Germans, and such was the earliest belief of mankind.

Perhaps the poet priests of primitive times, who shaped the imaginative mythology of the North, were conscious of the one true God; but considered Him above the comprehension of the rude men of the times, so they invented the deities who were more nearly akin to the material forces that these people alone understood. The second part of the first Edda contains the great Icelandic poems, the first of which is the song of Voland, the famous northern smith.

Voland, or Wayland, the Vulcan of the North, is of unknown antiquity; and his fame, which spread all over Europe, still lives in the traditions of all the nations of the North. These poems, although fragmentary, still far surpass the Nibelungen−lied, and in their powerful pathos and tragic passion they surpass any ancient poetry except that of Greece.

The Scandinavians in general, and Icelanders in particular, traveled over every part of the West, and penetrated into hitherto unexplored seas, collecting in every quarter the facts and fancies of the age. In the character of wandering Normans they exerted a strong influence in shaping poetry, and in developing the Crusades. They brought back with them to their Northern homes the Christian and chivalrous poems of the South. In many of these the likeness to the Icelanders own Northern Sagas was remarkable, suggesting some still more remote age when one heroic conception must have dominated all peoples.

After bringing home these poems of Southern Europe, the Scandinavians proceeded to adapt them to their own use, giving them a new force and beauty. The marvellous in Southern poetry became with them something fraught with deeper meaning; and the Northern version of the Nibelungen−lied acquired an ascendency in its strength and poetical beauty, over the German heroic. Hence, during the Middle Ages, the Scandinavians in general, and Icelanders in particular, came to possess a peculiar chivalrous poetry of their own. It was, however, destined to share the same fate as the great poems of the rest of Europe; first to be reduced to prose romance, and then broken up into ballads. The chief cause of this breaking up of the old order of poetry was due to the Reformation. The national poetry was left to be carried on by the common people alone, and of course in their hands was corrupted and mutilated. Scott speaks of this in his Lay of the Last Minstrel, where he describes the old bard, who

" 'Tuned to please a peasant's ear The harp a King had loved to hear."

These Bards, or Scalds, meaning Smoothers of Language, were welcome guests in the early ages, at the Courts of Kings and Princes. Up to the twelfth century, when the Monks and the art of writing, put an end to their profession, these poets continued to come from Iceland and travel all over the world. In return for their songs they received rings and jewels of more or less value; but never money. We have a list of 230 Scalds who made a name for themselves from the time of Dagnar Lodbrok to that of Vladimir II, or from the end of the eighth to the beginning of the thirteenth century. When Christianity entered Scandinavia the spirit of the old tradition still remained with the people, and became their literature under the name of "Folk Sagas," or as we would call them, fairy tales. These legends are found not only in modern Scandinavia, but they have made their way into all the literature of Europe. Jack the Giant Killer, Cinderella, Blue Beard, the Little Old Woman Cut Shorter, and the Giant who smelled the blood of an Englishman (the Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum of our nursery days), were all heroes and heroines of Scandinavian songs, later adapted in various ways to the use of different countries. After awhile this lost art revived in the Romances of chivalry, and in popular ballads. They describe all the changes in life and society, and are akin to the ballads of the British Isles. In them we find the common expression of the life and feelings of a common race. The same stories often influenced the bards of all countries at different periods. These ballads are all written in the same form and express a certain poetic feeling which is not found in the Epic Age. In

all countries they had a refrain, or chorus, which marks the migration of poetry from the Epic to the Lyric form.

"This simple voice of song," to quote a modern author, "travelled onward from mouth to mouth, from heart to heart, the language of the general sorrows, hopes and memories; strange, and yet near to every one, centuries old, yet never growing older, since the human heart, whose history it relates in so many changing images and notes, remains forever the same."

# SLAVONIC (RUSSIA).

Schlegel says of the Russian Nation:

"Her subjection to the Greek Church was alone sufficient during the Middle Ages, and is in some measure sufficient even in our own time, to keep Russia politically and intellectually at a distance from the rest of the Western world."

Little if any part was taken by the Slavs in the Crusades. They had hardly any of the spirit of chivalry, and their belief, during their period of barbaric heathenism, was not so romantic and ideal as the Gothic.

The heroic prose tales of Russia are older and more popular than her ballads. They are told in the nurseries, and recount the heroic deeds of Vladimir the Great. The ballads are mostly a recital of the feuds between the Poles and the Tartars, not unlike the Border ballads of Scotland.

Their greatest hero is Yermak, who conquered the Mongols, and in the fifteenth century won for the Czars the country that is now called Siberia. Yermak's deeds and praises are sung from one end of Russia to the other, even at the present day; and the poorest peasants usually have a colored print representing him on horseback, nailed to the wall of their cabins.

## SERBIAN.

The popular poetry of the Slavic race, which still survives, is found in its perfection among the Serbians and Dalmatians, while it is almost extinct among the other nations. It is of unknown antiquity, and has been handed down from one century to another.

The Slavs have always been a singing race, and must have been so from Pagan times, as their songs abound with heathen gods and customs, dreams, omens, and a true Eastern fatalism. Love and heroism are the usual themes, and among the Serbians the peculiar relation of sister and brother forms the principal subject of interest.

A Serbian woman who has no brother is considered a fit subject for sympathy. The Serbian poetry is nearly all Epic, and in this particular class of verse no modern nation has been so productive. There is a grand and heroic simplicity in their song, as it recounts their daily life; the hall where the women sit spinning near the fire, the windswept mountain side, where the boys are pasturing their flocks, the village square where youths and maidens dance, the country ripe for the harvest, and the forest through which the traveller journeys, all reecho with song. This Serbian poetry first became generally known in Europe through Goethe and Grimm in Germany, and Bowring and Lytton in England.

# FINNISH.

The Finnish race reached a high degree of civilization at a very early period. They have always been distinguished by a love of poetry, especially for the elegy, and they abound in tales, legends and proverbs. Until the middle of the twelfth century they had their own independent kings, since then they have been alternately conquered by the Russians and Swedes; but like the Poles, they have preserved a strong national feeling, and have kept their native language. Their greatest literary monument is the Kalevala, an epic poem. Elias Lonnrot, its compiler, wandered from place to place in the remote and isolated country in Finland, lived with the peasants, and took from them their popular songs, then he wrote the Kalevala, which bears a strong resemblance to Hiawatha. Max Muller says that this poem deserves to be classed as the fifth National Epic in the world, and to rank with the Mahabharata and the Nibelungen−lied. The songs are doubtlessly the work of different minds in the earliest ages of the nation.

# HUNGARIAN.

The Magyars, or Hungarians as they are called, came into Europe from Asia, and first settled between the Don and the Dneiper. They possessed from remote antiquity a national heroic poetry, the favourite subject of which was their migration and conquests under the Seven Leaders. They laid claim to Attila as being of their nation, and many of their most warlike songs recounted his deeds and those of the other Gothic heroes. The Magyars have never taken kindly to foreign influence, and when, in the fifteenth century, Mathias Corvin tried to bring Italian influence to bear on them, the result was a decline in literature, and neglect of the old poems and legends. During the Turkish invasions the last remnants of the national songs and traditions disappeared; and under the Austrian rule the Hungarians have become decidedly Germanized.

Within the past century Kisfalud has sought to restore the national legends of his country, and a new impetus has been given to the restoration and preservation of the Hungarian language and literature.

## GOTHIC.

Gothic poems were sung in the time of Attila; but the Gothic language and monuments have everywhere perished except in Spain, where the Spanish Monarchs are anxious to trace their descent from the Gothic Kings. Attila, Odoascar, Theodoric, and the Amali, with other heroes, Frankish and Burgundian, all appear in these old poems. The German songs that Charlemagne had collected and put in writing are undoubtedly the outcome of these ancient Gothic poems of the first Christian era. Their substance is found in the Nibelungen−lied and the Heldenbuch.

As in the legends of Troy and Iceland, so also in the Nibelungen−lied, the story centres on a young hero glowing with beauty and victory, and possessed of loftiness of character; but who meets with an early and untimely death. Such is Baldur the Beautiful of Iceland, and such, also, are Hector and Achilles of Troy. These songs mark the greatness and the waning of the heroic world In the Nibelungen−lied the final event is a great calamity that is akin to a half historical event of the North. Odin descends to the nether world to consult Hela; but she, like the sphinx of Thebes, will not reply save in an enigma, which enigma is to entail terrible tragedies, and lead to destruction the young hero who is the prey of the gods.

In this we can trace a similarity to the life's history and death of Christ. In the Middle Ages a passionate love of poetry developed in the Teutonic race, and caused them to embody Christianity in verse. The South Germans, and the Saxons in England, tried to copy the old heroic poems.

In the time of Theodoric, the Goths began to influence the Roman language and literature; and it is at this period that Roman antiquity comes to an end and the Roman writers from that time are classed as belonging to the Middle Ages.

The whole history of literature during the Middle Ages was of a twofold character. The first, Christian and Latin, was found all over Europe, and made the protection and extension of knowledge, its chief object. The other was a more insular literature for each nation, and always in the language of the people. Theodoric the Goth, Charlemagne, and Alfred the Great, the chief patrons of the literature of their age, sought to carry on, side by side, and to improve, these two literatures, the Latin and the vernacular. They aimed to refine and educate man by the Latin, and to increase the national spirit by preserving their national poetry. While these old heroic poems of the different races are full of interest and charm for us, we must not forget that the Latin kept alive and preserved from extinction the whole of classical and Christian antiquity.

The Middle Ages, so inaptly called "dark," are in truth little understood. A German writer of the nineteenth century, Friedrich von Schlegel, says:

"The nations have their seasons of blossoming, as well as individuals. The age of the Crusades, of chivalry, romance and minstrelsy, was an intellectual spring among all the nations of the West. In literature the time of invention must precede the refinements of art. Legend must go before history, and poetry before criticism. Vegetation must precede spring, and spring must precede the maturity of fruit.

"The succeeding ages could have had no such burst of intellectual vigor, if the preparing process had not been going on in the Middle Ages. They sowed and we reaped."

Hence, it will be seen that what is looked on as a period of stagnation and ignorance, was in truth, the waiting time, during which the inner process of development was going on, soon to blossom into glorious fruit.

# CHIVALROUS AND ROMANTIC LITERATURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

From the time of the first Crusade, A.D. 1093, to the end of the twelfth century, was the golden age of chivalry in Europe. Hence the poetry of this period partook of the spirit that was abroad in the world. Of this chivalrous poetry of the Middle Ages there are three classifications: The first, taken from old legends, shows a style of verse peopled with the Gothic, Frankish and Burgundian heroes who flourished in the time of the great Northern emigrations; and for these there is usually some historical foundation, while they are also closely knit to the traditions of the old heathenish mythology of the Gothic Nations. The second subject of chivalrous verse was Charlemagne, the Saracens and Roncesvalle. These were chiefly composed by the Normans, who, after the Crusades, gave a new direction to literature. Marked changes were introduced by them, not only into France, but throughout Europe. They were filled with the spirit of adventure and enthusiasm, and in their onward march conquered England and Sicily, and took the lead in the next Crusade. Essentially a poetic people, the wonderful was the object of all their admiration and desire. Hence they sang old war songs, especially of the battle of Roncesvalles in which Roland dies when the Franks are conquered by the Spaniards and Turks.

In the tale of a fabulous Crusade, invented in the ninth century, and which was embodied in poetry by the Normans, the true history of the Empire became so bewilderingly mixed up with magicians, genii, sultans, Oriental fables, and comical characters, who met with astonishing adventures, that it was difficult to distinguish the true from the false. There was nothing of the romantic and wonderful in the history of the East, which did not find its way into the poetry that treated of Charlemagne and Roland, until it lost all traces of the real wars and achievements of Charlemagne. The third subject of chivalric verse was Arthur of the Round Table; but this, at the time, was also invested with Oriental wonders and attachments. Other chivalric poetry of this epoch had to do with Godfrey of Bouillon, the Crusades, and old French tales and fabliaux which were brought into Europe by the oral narratives of the Crusaders.

The Northern mythology always abounded with mountain spirits, mermaids, giants, dwarfs, dragons, elves and mandrakes. These reappear in the songs of the Crusades, and are elements of the old Northern and Persian superstitions. All that the East contributed to the song of the chivalric period was a Southern magic, and a brilliance of Oriental fancy with which some of the poems were clothed.

A Persian poem that became very popular in Europe in the Middle Ages was Ferdusi's Book of Heroes. It has had a marked influence on the Arabian "Thousand and One Nights." In this poem of Ferdusi's we note the contest between light and darkness (an idea nowhere found in Greek poetry). It seemed to touch the poetical thought of the age of chivalry; for we find it reproduced in their songs, mingled with Scriptural and love scenes.

Next to Chivalric poetry, the age of the Crusaders was essentially a period of love songs. They attained their greatest perfection in Provence, whence they spread over the whole of France, and from there into Germany in the twelfth century.

Love poetry in Italy failed to attain any degree of perfection until the time of Petrarch in the fourteenth century; and its real era in Spain was not until a century later. Love poetry developed in different ways in Europe, and, as we have seen, at different times. Except among the Italians it was not so much borrowed from one nation to another as had been the case with other branches of literature.

It is different with Chivalric poetry, which was considered the common property of all. The form of poetical composition also varied in each country, and the only thing common to all the nations was rhyme. Almost all the love poems seem to have been written to be sung, and this was carried to such lengths that in the reign of Lewis the Pious of Germany, an edict had to be sent to the nuns of the German Cloisters by their Bishops, forbidding them to sing their love songs, or Mynelieder.

# THE DRAMA.

The history of the drama may be divided into two classes, the Christian, which began with the Mystery and Morality plays; and the Greek, which was eminently classic. These two types were the foundation of all that came after them.

The first dawn of the drama was in Greece; for although the Hindus also had dramatic poetry, it did not arise until there had been a lengthened intercourse between Greece and India, so that the latter undoubtedly borrowed from the former. The learned writers of ancient times agree that both tragedy and comedy were originally choral song. It has been said that poetry and song are divided into three periods of a nation's history, that the Epic has to do with the first awakening of a people, telling of their legends, or of some great deeds in remote antiquity. This is followed by the second stage, which embraces elegiac and lyric poetry and arose in stirring and martial times, during the development of new forms of government, when each individual wanted to express his own thoughts and wishes; and the third is the drama, which can only be born in a period of civilization, and which, it has been said, implies a nation.

Hence Greek drama arose at the height of Grecian civilization and splendor. It originated in the natural love of imitation, of dancing and singing, especially at the Bacchic feasts. The custom at these feasts of taking the guise of nymphs and satyrs, and of wearing masks while they danced and sang in chorus, seems to have been the beginnings of the Greek drama.

Ancient tragedy was ideal, and had nothing to do with ordinary life; it arose from the winter feasts of Bacchus, while comedy was the outcome of the harvest feasts, and the accompanying Bacchanalian processions, which were more in the nature of a frolic than of real acting. The influence of the Middle and New Greek comedy, especially, that of Menander, on the Roman comedy of Terence is well defined. Under Ennius and Plautus the Roman comedy was fairly original; but Terence wrote for the fashionable set, like Caecilius and Scipio Africanus, and consequently imitated Greek models very carefully. The drama in Rome never attained any noteworthy height although the French tragic poets took Seneca for their model.

In the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent there was a great revival in Italy of the ancient classic drama, of which Poliziano was the most successful exponent. Both he and the later writers, however, made no attempt to found any National Italian drama—their works are entirely an imitation of the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, and the comedies of Plautus and Terence.

The Melodrama, which arose in the seventeenth century, is distinctly Italian and national, and has been extensively produced all over the civilized world. Alfieri, in the eighteenth century, is the greatest and most patriotic of the Italian tragedians, and he did as much to revive the national character in modern times as Dante did in the fourteenth century.

In France we have the dramatic representation of the Mysteries in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, introduced by the pilgrims who had returned from the Crusades. At first these performances were given in the street, but later a company was formed, called the "Confraternity of the Passion," the suffering of Christ being its chief representation. This Mystery is the most ancient dramatic work of modern Europe, and gives the whole Gospel narrative from the birth of our Saviour until His death. Being too long for a play of one act, it was continued from day to day. What would seem irreverent on a modern stage was regarded as perfectly simple and natural in the Middle Ages, and it was a potent factor in teaching the masses the truths of their faith.

Following these Mysteries of the Passion came a host of other plays taken from the Old Testament, or from the lives of the Saints. The earliest "Miracle" on record is the Play of St. Catherine, which was represented at Dunstable about 1119, written in French; it was in all probability a rude picture of the miracles and martyrdom of the saint.

The stage was divided into three different floors, with Heaven on top, hell on the ground floor, and the earth between. Frequently the play would proceed in all three divisions at once, with angels and devils ascending and descending by means of ladders, as their help was needed in the different worlds.

The Devil generally played the part of clown or jester. The modern puppet play of Punch is a tradition handed down from these ancient miracles, in which the Evil One was alternately the conqueror or victim of the human

Buffoon; who was also called by the names of Jester or Vice.

These early miracle plays were generally written in mixed prose and verse.

The oldest manuscript of a miracle play in English is The Harrowing of Hell, believed to have been written in 1350.

The Morality plays were the outcome of the Mysteries; they were either allegorical or else taken from the Parables, or from the historical events in the Bible. The chief Moralities were Everyman, Lusty Juventus, Good Counsel, and Repentance. The oldest English Morality play now extant is The Castle of Perseverance, written about 1450. It is a dramatic allegory of human life representing the many conflicting influences that surround man on his way through the world. Lusty Juventus depicts in a vivid and humorous way the extravagances and follies of a young heir surrounded by the virtues and vices, and the misery which follows a departure from the path of religion and virtue. Gradually these Moralities were corrupted and became mixed with a species of comedy called Interludes, a merry and farcical dialogue. The Four P's, one of the best of these early Interludes, was written by John Heywood, an entertainer at the Court of Henry VIII. It turns upon a dispute between a Peddler, a Palmer, a Pardoner and a Poticary, in which each tries to tell the greatest lie; plays of this kind are seen in France at the present day. In the fifteenth century the drama in France became more secularized and included political events and satire, but the French were undoubtedly the fathers of drama in the Middle Ages. Their plays were known a whole century before Spain or Italy had any theater, while the romantic drama in other countries of Europe was founded on the early French drama. Modern drama in France during the time of Corneille, Racine and Voltaire was almost entirely classic. The French regarded the Greek standard as the highest art; and sought to imitate it faithfully, so much so that the French Academy, criticizing a tragedy of Corneille, said "that the poet, from the fear of sinning against the rules of art, had chosen rather to sin against the rules of nature."

Comic drama in France from the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century was borrowed from Spain, and had to do with a multiplication of trap doors, dark lanterns, intrigues, and puzzling disguises, until Moliere, in his "Precieuses Ridicules" successfully attacked these follies of his age.

The Romantic drama, which arose in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, holds at present the first place in France. Its chief exponents have been Victor Hugo, the two Dumases, Sardou and Octave Feuillet. Between them and the followers of the Classic School there was for some time a lively war. The latter wanted to exclude the Romanticists from the Theatre Francais, but without success. In spite of the beauty of its French, and the polish of its style, this latest form of the drama in France frequently offends strongly against morality. In Spain the drama was at all times thoroughly national. Even when they introduced mythological, Greek or Roman characters, it was always in a Castilian dress. In this respect Spain stands alone among the nations of Europe, as it borrowed nothing from France, Italy or England. Its earliest plays were the Mysteries, which it is supposed to have obtained from Constantinople, where the ancient theatre of Greece and Rome was kept up, in a grosser form, far into the Middle Ages. In later times this Eastern drama became so corrupt that the Christian Church tried to offset it by introducing the Mysteries, and it became a common custom every year at Christmas, for the Manger at Bethlehem, the Worship of the Shepherds, and the Adoration of the Magi, to be exhibited before the Altar, just as the Mysteries of the Passion were introduced during Lent. The Passion Play at Oberammergau and the Creche, representing the Manger at Bethlehem, as seen in Catholic Churches at Christmas, are the sole survivals of these ancient Mysteries.

The second dramatic period in Spain was pastoral and satirical. Nothing worthy of note adorns this period in the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century de Rueda and Lope de Vega founded the true national drama of Spain. It was unlike anything of an earlier period, and yet, resting faithfully on tradition, it gave a vivid picture of the National Spanish life in all classes of society. From the gallantries of the "dramas of the Cloak and Sword," to the historical plays in which Dings and Princes figure; down to the manners and incidents of common life, all is essentially Spanish. A fourth class still represented Scriptural and sacred scenes. Calderon wrote at the height of the Spanish drama during the reign of Philip II; and after his time the drama in Spain declined until, in the eighteen century, it was at its lowest ebb. At this time plays were still held in open courtyards, and in the daytime, as in the earlier ages. Efforts were made to subject it to French and Italian rule, but this had only a limited success; stiff, cold translation from the French could not please a people who always found in the Spanish drama an essentially popular entertainment.

In Germany traces of the drama first appeared in the thirteenth century, when rude attempts to imitate the

Mystery plays were conducted in churches by the priests. But when the populace tried to introduce the Burlesque, the performances were banished to the open fields. Students in the universities took part in them, and they continued until after the Reformation. Brought into Europe from Constantinople by the Crusaders and pilgrims, the Mystery plays became the chief amusement of an illiterate age. Christianity was first thoroughly impressed on the mind of Northern Europe by means of them; and the first missionaries familiarized the rude Goths and Huns with Biblical incidents at a time when reading was unknown outside of the Cloister. No change in German drama occurred until the seventeenth century, when operas after the Italian superseded the Mysteries and Moralities. The production of this age, however, were characterized by bad taste and pedantry; and it was not until Goethe brought his genius to bear on the subject, that the Germans acquired any drama worthy of the name. Whether in his national play Gotz von Berlichingen or in his classical drama of Iphigenia, this great German master stands at the summit of his art. Lessing attacked French drama as enacted in Germany prior to Goethe, and brought forward the Shakespearian plays as a model.

Schiller's Wallenstein obtained a worldwide reputation, and among the Romantic dramatists Werner's Attila and Grillparzer's Ancestress are the best examples of the extravagant and fertile mind of the German romanticist.

Modern German drama has found the highest art it has ever attained in the compositions of Richard Wagner, whose operas are entirely German and National, and mostly founded on the old German legends. Tannhauser is taken from the epic poem of "Parzifal," written by Wolfram von Eschenbach in the Middle Ages. Lohengrin, which is touched on in the "Parzifal," Wagner also found in the poem of an obscure Bavarian poet; and a more complete account of the celebrated "Swan Knight" appears in a collection of stories edited by the brothers Grimm. Lohengrin is a Knight of the Holy Grail, so part of the legend is borrowed from ancient Britain.

All dramatic effort in England before the sixteenth century was so rude as to be of little account. The Miracle and Mystery plays were introduced into England in the reign of Henry VI, and many of them had a personage called "Iniquity," a coarse buffoon, whose object was to amuse the audience. After the Reformation the Protestant Bishop Bale wrote plays on the same plan as the Mysteries, intended to instruct the people in the supposed errors of Popery. These plays, which deal largely in satire, became popular and after the era of Henry VIII were known as Interludes. In the beginning of the sixteenth century real comedy and tragedy began to exist in a rude form. The oldest known English comedy, Ralph Royster Doyster, was written by Nicholas Udall, and describes a character whose comic misadventures are somewhat akin to Don Quixote.

The earliest tragedy, Gorboduc, known also Ferrex and Porrex, was played in the Lower Temple. It is founded on the legends of fabulous British history. The tragedies of Marlowe and the legendary plays of Greene come next in order, followed by the golden age of English drama, from the dawn of the Shakespeare plays in 1585 until the closing of the theatre in 1645 on the breaking out of the Civil war in England. For a period of sixty years the splendid genius of the world's greatest dramatist gave to mankind a series of plays that have no equal in the literature of any country or age.

Contemporaneous with Shakespeare, or coming after him, were Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Massinger, Ford, and Shirley; these Elizabethan dramatists took their subjects from the stories and legends of all countries and ages—or else they depicted the national life. For this reason English drama has been called Irregular, in contrast to the Greek, which is called the Regular, and that of modern France, founded upon the Greek. The chief rule of the Regular is the Unity of Time, Place and Action. In the Greek, the time of action was allowed to extend to twenty−four hours, and the scene to change from place to place in the same city; but Shakespeare and his contemporaries acknowledged no fixed limit either of time, place or action. The operation of their plays covered many different countries, and the time extended over many years; but the rule that laid down in the Greek drama the principle that there should be unity of action (everything being subordinate to a series of events, which form the thread of the plot), was adopted by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It has been called "unity of impression," as opposed to unity of time and place.

# ARABIAN.

The rise and development of Arabian literature occurs at an epoch when the rest of Europe was struggling through a period of transition. From the middle of the sixth to the beginning of the eleventh century, at a time when the Roman dominions were overrun by Northern hordes, and the Greek Nation was groaning under the Byzantine power, when both Greek and Latin literature was exposed to the danger of extinction, the splendor of Arabian literature reached its zenith and through the mingling of the Troubadours with the Moors of the Peninsula, and of the Crusaders with the Arabs, it began to influence the literature of Europe.

Arabia, peopled by wandering tribes, had no history other than the songs of the national bards, until after the rise of Mohammed in the sixth century. The desire of the prophet was to bring his people back from idolatry and star worship to the primitive and true worship of God. He studied the Old and New Testament, the legends of the Talmud and the traditions of Arabian and Persian mythology, then he wrote the Koran, which became the sacred book of the Arabians, and in which is traced in outline the true plan of man's salvation—Death, Resurrection, the Judgment, Paradise and the place of torment. Good and evil spirits, the four archangels, Gabriel, Michael, Azrael and Izrafeel, are all found in the Koran; but clothed with a true Oriental fancy. Besides the angels there are creatures, partly human and partly spiritual, called Genii, Peris (or fairies) and Deev (or giants). The Genii have the power of making themselves seen or invisible at pleasure. Some of them delight in mischief, and raise whirlwinds, or lead travellers astray. The Arabians used to say that shooting stars were arrows shot by the angels against the Genii when they approached too near the forbidden regions of bliss.

This fairy mythology of the Arabians was introduced into Europe by the Troubadours in the eleventh century, and became an important factor in the literature of Europe. From it, and the Scandinavian mythology spring all the fairy tales of modern nations. And these romances of the Koran form the groundwork of the fabliaux of the Trouveres, and of the romantic epics of Boccaccio, Tasso, Ariosto, Spenser and Shakespeare. Mohammed's teaching unified the different tribes of Arabia, and fostered a feeling of national pride, and a desire for learning. So rapidly did this develop that in less than a century the Arabian power and religion, as well as its language, had gained the ascendency over nearly half of Africa, a third of Asia, and a part of Spain; and from the ninth century to the sixteenth, the Arabian literature surpassed that of any nations of the same period.

This people, who, in a barbarous state had tried to abolish all cultivation in science and literature, now became the masters of learning, and they drew from the treasure houses of the countries that they had acquired by conquest, all the riches of knowledge at their command.

The learning of the Chaldeans and of the Magi, the poetry and fine arts of Asia Minor, the eloquence and intellect of Africa, all became theirs.

Greece counts nearly eight centuries from the Trojan war to the summit of her literary development. From the foundation of Rome till the age of Augustus the same number of centuries passed over the Roman world; while in French literature the age of Louis XIV was twelve centuries removed from the advent of Clovis; but in Arabian literature, from the time of the family of the Abassides, who mounted the throne in 750—and who introduced a passionate love for poetry, science and art—until the time of Al Mamoun, the Augustus of Arabia, there elapsed only one hundred and fifty years, a rate of progress in the development of literature among a nation that has no parallel in history.

Tournaments first originated among the Arabs, and thence found their way into France and Italy. Gunpowder was known to them a century before it appeared in Europe, and they were in possession of the compass in the eleventh century, and this notwithstanding the fact that a German chemist is supposed to have discovered gunpowder a century after the Arabs made use of it, while the compass is more frequently supposed to be a French or Italian invention of the thirteenth century.

Botany and chemistry were more familiar to them than they were to the Greeks or Romans. Bagdad and Cordova had famous schools of astronomy and medicine, and here in the tenth and eleventh centuries the Arabians were the teachers of the world. Students came to them from France and other parts of Europe; and their progress, especially in arithmetic, geometry and astronomy, was marvellous. The poetry of the Arabs is rhymed like ours, and is always the poetry of passion and love; but it is in their prose works, the Arabian tales of the

Thousand and One Nights, that they have become most famous. Their richness of fancy in these prose tales is different from that of the other chivalric nations. The supernatural world is identical in both; but the moral world is different. The Arabian tales, like the old chivalric romances, take us to the realms of fairyland, but the human beings they introduce are very unlike. Their people are less noble and heroic, more moved by love and passion, and they depict women by turn as slaves and divinities. The original author of the Arabian Nights is unknown; but the book has become a household possession in every civilized country in the world.

# SPANISH.

For six centuries before the advent of the Arabs in Spain the country was under the Roman yoke, and had adopted the language and arts of the Romans; but in the eighth century the overthrow of the Romans, the coming of the Arabs, and contact with Arabian civilization—as well as the struggle against their Moorish invaders—began to develop in the Spaniards a spirit that was the foundation of their national literature. No other people have ever possessed in so strong a degree the true national feeling− −no other has produced such a uniformly pure, deeply religious, and elevated tone, in poetry and literature. Their poetry remained at all times free from any foreign influence, and is entirely romantic, while the Christian chivalric poetry of the Middle Ages remained with them longer than with any other nation, and received from their hands a more finished and elegant polish.

After the Moorish conquest the Spaniards withdrew to the mountains of Asturias; they took with them a corrupted form of the Latin language, as they had received it from the Romans; reaching these mountains, they found themselves thrown with the Iberians (the earliest of the Spanish races). These people had remained half barbaric, had resisted both Romans and Goths, and retained their original or Basque language. Coming now in contact with them, the Christian Spaniards learned their language. Later they met with another tribe of their own race who had remained with the Arabians, known as the Mocarabes, a people of superior refinement and civilization. Hence a new dialect from these contending elements was gradually formed, and became known, like the other languages of southern Europe, as the Romanic. The distinguishing feature of Spanish literature, from its birth, to the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, is religious faith and knightly loyalty. Qualities which sustained the whole nation in its struggle against the infidel Moors.

The first great Spanish work is the poem of the Cid. It is the only epic Spain has ever produced, and is the most ancient of any in the Romance language. It is also valuable as a faithful picture of the manners and characters of the eleventh century. Indeed, the chief characteristic of Spanish song and poetry is its delineation of the national life. It is said that the Cid is the foremost poem produced in Europe from the thousand years that marked the decline of Greek and Roman civilization, to the appearance of the Divine Comedy. The Count Lucanor, a work of the fourteenth century, was one of the earliest prose writings in the Spanish tongue, as the Decameron, which was written about the same time, was the first in Italian. Both are narrative tales; but their moral tone is very dissimilar—the Decameron was written to amuse, while the Count Lucanor is addressed to a grave and serious nation. These stories have frequently been dramatized, and one of them gave Shakespeare the outline of his Taming of the Shrew.

Alfonso the Wise, in the thirteenth century, was the author of a legislative code known as Las Sieta Partides, or the Seven Parts. It forms the Spanish common law, and has been the foundation of Spanish Jurisprudence ever since; and being used also in the colonies of Spain, it has, since the Louisiana Purchase, become in some cases the law in our own country.

Juan Ruiz, who lived in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, wrote a poem, partly fiction and partly allegorical, called the Battle of Don Carnival, which strongly resembles Chaucer; both poets found their material in northern French verse.

Santob, a Jew in the fourteenth century, wrote a poem called the Dance of Death, which became a favourite subject with both painters and poets for several succeeding ages.

The literature of Spain may be divided into four classes—the old Ballads, the Chronicles, the Romances of Chivalry, and the Drama. The most interesting of the old ballads are historical; but there are also ballads that have to do with private life wherein appear the effusions of love, the shafts of satire, the descriptions of pastoral life, and the oddities of burlesque. One and all, however, faithfully represent Spanish life. No such popular poetry is found in any other language. The English and Scotch ballads belong to a more barbarous state of society, and their verse is less dignified and lofty than that of the Spaniards, who were uplifted by a deep religious sense, and an unswerving loyalty to their sovereign. A state of feeling that elevated them far above the men and events of border feuds, and the wars of rival Barons.

The great Spanish heroes, the Cid, Bernardo del Carpo, and Pelayo, are to this day a vital part of the belief and

poetry of the lower classes in Spain, and are revered as they were hundreds of years ago. The wandering Mulateers still sing of Guarinos and of the defeat at Roncesvalles as they did when Don Quixote heard them on his way to Toboso; and the street showmen in Seville rehearse to this day the same wonderful adventures that the Don saw in the Inn at Montesinos. The Chronicles developed among the more refined and educated classes. The most celebrated is the Chronicle of Spain, written by Alfonso the Wise. It starts with the creation of the world, and ends with the death of Alfonso's father, St. Ferdinand. It contains all the time−honored traditions of the country, as well as exact historical truth. The story of the Cid is supposed to be taken from this work.

From the time of Alfonso the Wise to the accession of Charles V (or from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth), Spain was flooded by romantic chronicles. The most celebrated is that of Don Roderick, or an account of the reign of King Roderick in the eighth century, the conquest of the country by the Moors, and the efforts to wrest it from them. On this chronicle Robert Southey has founded most of his poem of Roderic the Last of the Goths. Whether resting on truth or fable, these old records struck their roots deep down in the hearts of the people; and their romance, their chivalry, their antique traditions, and their varied legends, form a rich deposit from which all the nations of Europe have drawn material for their own literature. It was not until the fourteenth century that the romances of chivalry—known in France two centuries earlier in the stories of Arthur and the Round Table, and the deeds of Charlemagne—found their way across the Pyrenees.

Spain, so essentially the land of knighthood, welcomed them eagerly, and speedily produced a number of like romances which were translated into French and became famous. The most celebrated is Amadis, written by de Lobeira, a Portuguese. Its sole purpose is to set forth the type of a perfect knight, sans peur et sans reproche. Amadis is an imaginative character; but he is the first of a long line of doers of knightly deeds, culminating in Don Quixote, whose adventures have charmed and delighted the Spaniards, as well as the men of other nations.

Provencal literature began to have an influence on the Spanish in 1113, after the crown of Provence had been transferred from Arles to Barcelona by the marriage of the then Provencal heiress to Beranger, Count of Barcelona. This introduction of the Provencal literature into northeastern Spain had a beneficial result on the two literatures, fusing them into a more vigorous spirit.

Spain had always maintained the closest relations with the See of Rome, and numerous Spanish students were educated at the Italian Universities, hence the Italian literature had some influence on the Spanish, more lasting as a whole than the effects of Provencal literature. From 1407 to 1454 King John II tried to form an Italian school in Spain, gathering around him a poetical court. This Italian influence extended into the sixteenth century. Diego de Mendoza, during the reign of Charles V wrote a clever satirical prose work called Lazarillo de Tormes, which became the foundation of a class of fiction of which Gil Blas, by Le Sage, is the best known and most celebrated example.

Except for the Cid, Spain had no historical narrative poems of any account, and her prose historical works, especially on the discovery and conquest of America, are of a purely local character, and had no influence outside of Spain. The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the accession to the throne of Philip V, a grandson of Louis XIV; and this brought a strong French influence into the country, which for a time dominated the national literature.

A new poetical system founded on Boileau was introduced by Luzan in his Art of Poetry; but it did not seem to bring about any real advance in literature; and it was not until Spain threw off this foreign yoke, that any revival in her literature took place. It is due to a monk, Benito Feyjoo, in the middle of the eighteen century that a renaissance in Spanish literature took place. Feyjoo, a devout Catholic, labored to bring to light scientific truths, and to show how they harmonized with the true Catholic spirit. In the same century Isla, a Jesuit, undertook with entire success, to purify the Spanish pulpit, which had become lowered both in style and tone. His history of Friar Gerund, which slightly resembles Don Quixote, aimed a blow at bombastic oratory, causing it soon to die out. Proverbs which Cervantes had styled "short sentences drawn from long experience," have always been a distinctive Spanish product, and can be traced back to the earliest ages of the country. No fewer than 24,000 have been collected, and many more circulate among the lower classes which have not been recorded in writing.

# PORTUGUESE.

The earliest imitators in Europe of the bucolic poetry of Virgil, were the Portuguese; and as a people they thought that the pastoral life was the ideal model for poetry. This idea is strongly brought out by Ribeyro in the sixteenth century.

The great number of Mocarbians that settled in Portugal infused into them as a nation, a stronger Orientalism than is found elsewhere in Europe, and their poetry was of an enthusiastic order, more marked than that of the Spaniards.

Henry of Burgundy, who married a daughter of Alfonso XI of Spain, in the eleventh century, introduced Provencal poetry. The Cancioneros, or courtly ballads, in imitation of the Provencal, were sung by wandering minstrels, and Portuguese poetry retained its Provencal character until the end of the fourteenth century.

In the fifteenth century, the Portuguese invaded Africa, and Vasco de Gama pointed out to Europe the new and unknown route to India. Fifteen years later, toward the close of the century, a Portuguese kingdom was founded in Hindostan, causing a strong counter−current of Orientalism to invade Portugal. The people awoke to a desire for greatness; and poetry and the arts flourished. This period, extending into the sixteenth century, is called the golden age of Portuguese literature.

The Os Lusiades, an epic poem, that has been called "one of the noblest monuments ever raised to the national glory of any people," was written by Luis de Camoens, a Portuguese of the sixteenth century. It is intensely patriotic, although it is touched by both Greek mythology, and the Italian style, which during this epoch had been slightly blended with the Portuguese. Portugal had little or no influence on the literature of any nation but her own, receiving her strongest impressions from outsiders. In the eighteenth century she was dominated both in taste and manners by the French, and the beginning of the nineteenth century found her a great admirer and imitator of English literature.

National songs are known to have been sung in Portugal during the earliest times; but none of them have come down to us. They were doubtless similar to the other bardic songs of Europe.

# FRENCH.

It is in the first ages of national existence that the foundations of national character and poetry are laid; and the farther back that history is studied, the more closely do we find the different peoples of the world united in their literature. Its first history in France is undoubtedly that of the Troubadours. Provence, where it originated, early became an independent kingdom, while in the north the literature of the Trouveres became the foundation of the national literature of France. Latin was the language of the country after its conquest by Julius Caesar; then came the Northern hordes, when language became corrupted, until, in the time of Charlemagne, German was the Court language, Latin the written language, and the Romance dialect, still in its barbaric state, was the speech of the people. The Gauls in the North, who used the Romance, were also called the Roman−Wallons; they were distinguished from Charlemagne's German subjects, while in the South the natives were called the Romans−Provencaux.

In the tenth century the Normans invaded France, and infused another element in the language, which gradually became Norman− French; and from the twelfth century the two dialects were known as Provencal and French. The Provencal dialect, although much changed, is still spoken in Provence, Languedoc, Catalonia, Valencia, Majorca, and Minorca, while the French was brought, by gradual polish, to its present perfection.

The Troubadours who flourished for three centuries, from 950 to 1250, used the Romance language in their poems. The brilliance of this period of literature, its sudden rise, and as sudden disappearance, is not unlike the rise and fall of the Arabian literature.

Among the thousands of poets who flourished during this time, none ever wrote anything of any special note. The love, romance and imagination of these poems breathes that chivalry toward women, amounting almost to veneration, which was a feature of this class of poetry. It is therefore to be regretted that as actual tales, shorn of the poetical and chivalric setting, there was something left to be desired. The immorality of the incidents, and the coarseness of the language, makes this "Gay Science," as the Troubadours called it, unfit to be classed with the best literature. In 1092 the crown of Provence passing to the Count of Barcelona brought a more refined taste into the Provencal poetry; the arts and the sciences of the Arabians obtained a foothold in the country; rhyme—the method used in Arabian poetry, was adopted by the Troubadours, and from them has been handed down to the nations of modern Europe.

This period has been described as "one that shone out at once over Provence and all the south of Europe, like an electric flash in the midst of profound darkness, illuminating all things with the splendor of its flame."

During the Crusades many of the Troubadours departed for the Holy Land. In the history of the world there is no event that fired the poetry and imagination of the people like these holy wars, and religious enthusiasm began to influence the poetry of the time. When the Plantagenet kings of England assumed by right the sovereignty over Languedoc (as Provence was called), a new impetus was given to the Provencal poetry, as well as a wider scope, when it was introduced into England. Chaucer, the father of English literature, found in the Provencal literature all his first models.

With the decline of the Troubadours occurred the rise of the Trouveres in northern France.

In the tenth century Normany was invaded by Rollo the Dane, who incorporated himself and his followers with the Normans. They adopted the Norman−French; but gave it a power and scope it had hitherto lacked. While the Romance−Provencal in the South was a language of sweetness and beauty, the Northern language after the advent of Rollo, was strong and warlike. Its poetry, which differed from the love chansons of the South, was the song of brave warriors, recounting the heroic deeds of their ancestors.

The Langue d'oui, as this Northern speech was called, became, in the twelfth century, the universal medium of literature. The poets and story writers called themselves Trouveres, and they invented the fabliaux, the dramatic mysteries and romances of ancient chivalry. The first great literary work of this class is a marvellous history of the early kings of England, commencing with Brutus, a grandson of Aeneas, who, sailing among many enchanted Isles, at length settles in England, where he meets Arthur of the Round Table, and the old wizard, Merlin, one of the most popular creations of the Middle Ages. Born of this legend were some of the best known of modern romances. The word romance, which in the early history of France was used to distinguish the common dialect

from the Latin, was later applied to all imaginative and inventive tales. Of this class was "Tristam de Leonois," written in 1190; the "San Graal," and "Lancelot." In the same century appeared "Alexander," a poem which became so celebrated that poetry, written in the same measure, is to this day called Alexandrine verse.

A poetess known as Marie of France, wrote twelve lays to celebrate the glories of the Round Table. She addresses herself to a king supposed to be Henry VI, and has made extensive use of early British legends. Chaucer and other English poets, have drawn many inspirations from her poems.

The Trouveres not only originated the romances of chivalry; but they also invented allegorical poems. The most celebrated is the "Romance of the Rose," written in the thirteenth century. It consisted of 20,000 verses, and although tedious, because of its length, it was universally admired, and became the foundation of all subsequent allegory among the different nations. The poetry of the Trouveres was unlike anything in antiquity, and unlike, too, to what came after it. It dealt with high−minded love and honor, the devotion of the strong to the weak, and the supernatural in fiction. All this, which formed part of its composition, has been attributed to both the Arabians and the Germans; but it was in truth a peculiar production of the Normans, the most active and enterprising people in Europe, a nation who pushed into Russia, Constantinople, England, France, Sicily and Syria. A treasury of a later date, from which the Trouveres drew their fabliaux in the thirteenth century, was a collection of Indian tales that had been translated into Latin in the tenth century. These fabliaux show that inventiveness, gaiety, and simple, yet delightful esprit, which is found nowhere but among the French. The Arabian tales, which had found their way into France, were also turned into verse, while the anecdotes that were picked up in the castles and towns of France, furnished other material for the fabliaux. These tales were the common property of the country at large, and are the source from which Boccaccio, La Fontaine, and others drew their inspiration. Some of them became famous and have been passed down from one age to another.

The Renard of Goethe, and the Zaire of Voltaire were taken from the old fabliaux. In the fourteenth century the coming of the Popes and the Roman Court to Avignon introduced an Italian element, and the language of Tuscany took the place of the Provencal among the upper classes.

La Fontaine, called the "Prince of Fablists," appeared in the seventeenth century. Many of his fables were borrowed from ancient sources; but clothed in a new dress. He has been closely imitated by his Confreres and by the fablists of other nations; but has easily remained the most renowned of them all.

The philosophy of Descartes in the sixteenth century prepared the way for Locke, Newton and Leibnitz; and his system, although now little used, was really the foundation of what followed. He is said to have given new and fresher impulse to mathematical and philosophical study than any other student, either ancient or modern.

Pascal, a contemporary of Descartes, is renowned for his Provencal Letters, a book that has become a classic in France. It is full of wit, and of exquisite beauty of language; but its teaching is pure sophistry. Pascal first set the example of writing about religion in a tone of mock levity, especially when by so doing, he could abuse the Jesuits. In the end this weapon of keen and delicate satire was turned against Christianity itself, when Voltaire in the eighteenth century recognized its possibilities, and made use of it.

The older French literature in the sixteenth century had become so neglected, and was so lacking in cultivation; so little adapted to poetry, that the nation seemed in danger of losing all its earlier traditions. For a hundred years France was given over to profane and light literature. Montaigne, Charyon, Ronsard and de Balzac are some of the names of this period. The death of a cat or dog was made the subject of a poem that was no real poetry. It is due to the women of France—to Madame de Rambouillet and her confreres, and to the literary coteries that arose in the middle of the seventeenth century—that French literature acquired a deeper and more serious tone. This period was followed by the founding of the French Academy, of which Cardinal Richelieu was the chief patron. The tragic dramatists, Corneille and Racine, now appeared on the literary horizon. Racine's language and versification was said to be far superior to either Milton in English or Virgil in Latin.

In tragedy the French stand pre−eminent; but it is matter for regret that their subjects are never taken from their own nation—they rarely represent French heroes; and it is a weakness of their literature that they make no direct appeal to the national feeling. There is a close connection between the classical dramas of Racine and Corneille, and such works as Pope's Iliad, Addison's Cato and Dryden's Alexander's Feast, showing the general interest in Greek and Roman subjects during their time.

The older poetry of the chivalric period was entirely discarded, though it would have been possible to unite the old chivalric spirit, the freedom and romance of mediaeval times, with the later renaissance, as was done by

other nations. The French literature is more closely formed on the model of the earlier refined nations of antiquity, as the Roman was on the Greek.

The later French poetry of the seventeenth century came into opposition with the teaching of Rousseau, this gave birth to a taste for English poetry and the classic poetry of France was a copy of the descriptive poetry of England. In the eighteenth century prose writings superseded verse. At this time the English had taken the lead in literature, and modern French philosophy was built on that of Bacon and Locke. It was no part of the plan of the English philosophers, however, to inculcate such ideas as the French philosophers drew from their writings. Bacon, who was profoundly Christian, believed that man alone was the type of God, and nature the work of God's hands; but the French leaders in philosophy went beyond this, they deified nature, and threw aside as mysticism whatever could not be proved by sense. Voltaire made use of all the wonderful greatness of science, as revealed by Bacon and Newton, not to exalt the Creator; but to lower man to the level of the brute. Like the old Greek sophists, who defended first one side of a question, and then the one diametrically opposed to it, Voltaire would write one book in favor of God, and another to deny Him; but it is not difficult to see which is his real belief. This perverted philosophy of Voltaire in turn reacted on the English mind, and particularly on history. We see its workings in both Gibbon and Hume. The "little philosophy" which "inclineth a man's mind to atheism," led the eighteenth century philosophers to fancy that Newton's discoveries meant that everything could be attained without religion, and that the only true and wide vision could be reached by the senses alone. They taught a pure materialism, to their own undoing; for it is not possible to thus lightly throw aside our great links with the past, in which both Christian and heathen, knowingly and unknowingly, in mediaeval poetry, in heroic ballad, and in Egyptian prose, testified to the existence of God.

The nineteenth century in France has been rich in dramatists, novelists, historians and poets, as well as in science and learning of all kinds; but it has had no especial power, or aim, and its opinions are constantly changing. The early novelists were strongly directed by the writings of Sir Walter Scott, while later ones have sought to imitate Victor Hugo and George Sand. The literature of this period has had no effect outside of France. Poetry has not risen any higher than Alfred de Musset; and any further greatness in French poetry must come from a revival of their own ancient poems and legends.

Poetry that deals only with the present becomes local, and in the end is influenced by the constant caprice and change of fashion instead of by the deep, heart−stirring beliefs of a strong and united people.

# ITALIAN.

The first general language of Italy was the Latin, and so strongly was the Italian mind dominated by the influence of ancient Rome that her earliest writers sought to keep alive the Roman tradition. This spirit of freedom led to the establishment of the Italian Republics, and after the Lombard cities threw off the yoke of Frederick Barbarossa they turned their chief attention to education and literature. The spirit of chivalry and chivalric poetry never took such root in Italy as it did in other European countries. Nevertheless, Italy was not uninfluenced by the Crusades, and the Arabs, establishing a celebrated school of medicine at Salerno, gave a new impetus to the study of the classics. In Bologna was opened a school of jurisprudence, where Roman law was studied, and these schools, or universities soon appeared in other parts of Italy.

The Italians devoted more time to the study of law and history, and to making translations from the Greek philosophers, than to the cultivation of chivalric poetry, although many of the Italian poets wrote in Provencal and French; and Italian Troubadours made journeys to the European Courts.

It has been said that the only poetry that has any real power over a people is that which is written or composed in their own language. This is especially true of Italy. Following this early Latin period came Dante, the most glorious, and inventive of the Italian poets, and indeed one of the greatest masters of verse in the world. He perfected the Tuscan, or Florentine dialect, which was gradually becoming the literary language of Italy. Petrarch, who succeeded Dante, is greatest in his Italian poems, and it is by these that he is best known, while his Latin works, which he hoped would bring him fame, have been almost forgotten.

In the fifteenth century the use of the national language in literature entirely died out, through the rise of the Humanists, and the craze for Greek and Latin classics; but toward the end of the fifteenth century, under Lorenzo de'Medici and Leo X, interest in their own literature among the Italians began to revive again. Ariosto and Tasso wrote their magnificent epics; and once more Italian poetry was read and appreciated, and reached the height of its renown. Again in the seventeenth century it declined under the influence of the Marini school; whose bad taste and labored and bombastic style, was unfortunately imitated in both France and Spain. In the eighteenth century, under the patronage of Benedict XIV, the Arcadian poets of the Marini school were banished from literature, and other and more brilliant writers arose, possessed of the true national feeling. Under Pope Pius VI, by whom he was liberally patronized, Quirico Visconti undertook his "Pio Clementine Museum," and his "Greek and Roman Iconography," said to be the two greatest archaeological works of all ages.

With the rise of Napoleon, Italy was flooded with French writings, and French translations, not always of the best, and even the French language was used instead of the Italian. The Italian literature again suffered a decline, and it was not until after the treaty of Vienna in 1815 that the foreign influence was again shaken off. It will thus be seen that it was when Italian poets wrote in their own language that their greatest and most lasting success was attained. During the periods when a craze for imitating foreign works existed, the national languages deteriorated. In Germany, under the Emperor Maximilian, a crown was publicly bestowed on any poet who achieved success in Latin verse, while no reward or emolument was given to those who wrote in German. The religion of Humanism in Italy went to such lengths that many seemed to lose not only their belief but also their good sense, as they considered it vulgar to talk of the Deity in the language of the Bible. God was spoken of in the plural—gods. The Father was Jupiter, the Son, Apollo; and the Devil, Pluto; but these various errors had no lasting or far−reaching influence. The Divine Comedy, the most powerful and lifelike exponent of the thoughts and feelings of the age in which Dante lived—an allegory, written in the form of a vision, at a time when men believed that the things that are unseen are eternal—is the most perfect and magnificent monument of earthly love, refined and spiritualized, that has ever been written. It stands alone; for no man of any country, coming after Dante, has been able to write from the same motive, and in the same spirit, that he did. Petrarch, the next greatest after Dante, is chiefly celebrated for his lyrical poems, which were used as models by all the most celebrated poets of the South of Europe. They are written in two forms, the canzone taken from the Provencals, and the sonnet, taken from the Sicilians. Petrarch kept up a wide correspondence with the literary men of Europe; and through his influence a sort of literary republic arose which joined together the literati of many different countries. Boccaccio, next in rank to Petrarch, evolved a poetry consisting of Norman wit and Provencal love, joined to an elaborate setting of

his own. He took Livy and Cicero for his models, and tried to combine ancient mythology with Christian history, the result being that his writings were not so fine as they would have been had they displayed a greater freedom a of style. His most celebrated work is the Decameron, the idea of which is taken from an old Hindu romance which was translated into Latin in the twelfth century. Most of these tales have also been found in the ancient French fabliaux, and while Boccaccio cannot be said to have really invented them, he did clothe them anew, and his tales in their turn have been translated into all the European languages.

It is due to Cosmo and Lorenzo de' Medici, and to Pope Leo X, that there was such a glorious development of the fine arts in the fifteenth century, an era whose benefits have been felt among the cultivated nations for over three hundred years.

At the same time Poliziano created the pastoral tragedy, which served to revive the study of Virgil. Other poets seizing on the old romance of the Trouveres, added to them an element of mockery, in place of the old religious belief. This new spirit was adopted by Ariosto. From the East he borrowed the magic and sorcery interwoven in the adventures of his knights and ladies, giants and magicians. It remained for Torquato Tasso to revive the heroic epic in his Jerusalem Delivered, in which he depicts the struggle between the Christians and Saracens. Neither the Siege of Trod, nor the Adventures of Aeneas could compare with the splendid dramatic element in Tasso's immortal poem, which has been said to combine the classic and the romantic style in a new and unusual degree.

In the sixteenth century Strapparola, an Italian novelist, wrote a number of fairy tales, which have been a treasure house for later writers, and to which we are indebted for Puss in Boots, Fortunio, and other stories which have now become familiar in the nursery lore of most modern nations. Bandello, in the same century, was a novelist from whom Shakespeare and other English dramatists have borrowed much material.

One thing which is peculiar to Italy, and which has found its way into nearly the whole civilized world, is Italian Opera or melodrama. It was an outcome of the Pastoral drama, and first took shape in 1594 under Rinuccini, a Florentine. But the true father of Italian opera is Metastasio, who flourished in the eighteenth century. He regarded opera as the national drama of Italy, and raised it to a plane that it has ever since retained; though of late years it has become more the fashion to cultivate German opera.

# DUTCH.

Erasmus said of Ghent at the end of the fifteenth century that there was no city in Europe that could compare with it in greatness, power, and the cultivation of its people. The lays of the minstrels and the chivalric romances of other nations were translated into Dutch. In the middle of the thirteenth century Reynard the Fox was rendered into the same language, while this era also saw a translation of the Bible made into Flemish rhyme.

The close of the fourteenth century saw the rise of some wandering poets called Sprekers, who visited the courts of Kings and Princes and became so popular that in the fifteenth century they were federated into different societies that became known as "Chambers of Rhetoric," somewhat similar to the German Guilds of the Meistersingers. These societies spread rapidly through the country, and from rhyme the members passed to the mystery plays, and to the beginnings of the drama.

The Court of Burgundy in the fifteenth century brought a strong French element into the literature of the Dutch nation, and the poets and chroniclers of that age are chiefly Flemish.

The taste for Greek and Latin was introduced into Holland in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Erasmus and Grotius, the two most learned men among the Dutch literati of their age.

Hooft in the seventeenth century made an extensive study of Italian poetry, and succeeded in imparting to his tragic and lyric verse a certain quality of sweetness and volume which it has since retained. His style, which also embraces tragedy, has been extensively imitated by his own countrymen.

Nearly the whole of the eighteenth century passed without any advancement in Dutch literature. The country experienced the French influence, in common with the rest of Europe; and French works and translations abounded. Toward the close of this century German taste began to predominate, and a young Dutchman, Van Effen, founded a magazine in French, called the "Spectator," which was in imitation of, and on the same lines as the English magazine of the same name. Many native writers arose at this time and gained distinction in poetry, prose and the drama; but the overthrow of the Dutch Republic, and the confusion attending it, for a time extinguished the national literature, and the beginning of the nineteenth century saw the country flooded with poor translations of foreign books, and all the noble national literature was forgotten. This evil was partly remedied in the latter part of the nineteenth century; but as a whole, the Dutch literature, while it has been influenced by foreign taste, has had little or no weight outside of its own nation, and has not in any way shaped the literature of other peoples.

# GERMAN.

Germany, like the other Northern nations, had primitive war songs sung by the bards. Her mythology is akin to the Scandinavian, and like the latter she assigns a high place to women. Tacitus says: "It is believed that there is something holy and prophetic about them, and therefore the warriors neither despise their counsels nor disregard their responses."

This German paganism was eminently fanciful—it peopled the earth, air and sea with supernatural beings—the rivers had their Undines, the caverns their Gnomes, the woods their Sprites, and the ocean its Nixes. Besides these, there were a host of mythological figures—the Walkyres or bridal maidens, the river maids; and the white women, Hertha and Frigga. These legends have formed a rich treasure house from which later German authors have freely drawn for song or story. Before the Christian age Germany had no literature and the first national work that can be dignified by the name is a translation of the Bible into Moeso−Gothic by Ulphilas, a bishop of the Goths, in the fourth century A.D. This is a Catholic work that antedated Luther by a thousand years.

Bishop Ulphilas invented an alphabet of Runic, Greek and Roman letters, and this translation of the Bible remained the only literary monument of the Germans for four hundred years. The minstrel lays of this period were later collected by Charlemagne, of which two specimens have come down to us. Like the Icelandic, Anglo−Saxon, Scandinavian, old English, and old Saxon, they are in a measure called alliteration, that is, a repetition of the sound without the regular rhyme at the end of lines, or such as we call rhyme. This circumstance made Klopstock, at a later period, try to banish rhyme as not being correct according to ancient usage. One of these poems, the Hildebrand−lied, belongs to the time of Theodoric the Great. The songs collected by Charlemagne, were later remodelled and have come down to us as the Heldenbuch and the Nibelungen−lied. The intellectual light in Germany went out with the death of Charlemagne, except in the cloisters.

The Normans on the West and the Hungarians in the East menaced the country, and the only important literary work of the time is a poem written by a monk at the close of the ninth century. It is called "Ludwig's Lied;" and celebrates the triumph of Louis over the Normans. Roswitha, a nun in the tenth century, wrote some Christian dramas in Latin that are remarkable as coming from the pen of a woman in the Middle Ages.

The invasions of the Hungarians and Slavs in the eleventh century effectually prevented the blossoming of any literary effort, except for some poems known as the Lombard Cycle, in which the rude pagan legends of antiquity were blended with the dawnings of Christianity. But in 1138, when Conrad III became Emperor of Germany, his accession was followed by the Crusades, which spread a flame of enthusiasm and chivalry among the Germans.

In 1149 Conrad and Louis VII of France joined forces to lead a Crusade to the Holy Land, and thus the German and French nobility became intimately acquainted, and Provencal poetry soon began to have an effect on German literature.

Emperors and nobles held court and received their foreign guests with splendid display and hospitality. Poets and singers were welcomed, and the chivalric literature was soon taken up by the Suabian minstrels who became known as the Minnesingers.

From 1150 to 1300 was the golden age of Suabian literature and German chivalry. During this period numerous romances of chivalry were translated into German.

They have been divided into different classes, or cycles.

The first, and most ancient, have to do with Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Their origin is Anglo−Norman, and they were probably taken from old Welsh chronicles in an early age, and were known in Britain and Brittany before the poets began to put them in rhyme.

The most popular of these romances was the San Graal, or Holy Grail, a subject that has engaged some of the best poets of all countries. In this legend the Cup, which was supposed to have been used at the Last Supper, in some way is brought to Golgotha during the Crucifixion, and is used to preserve some of the blood that flows from Christ's side, when it is opened by the soldier's spear. Joseph of Arimathea is thought to have brought this precious Cup to Europe, and to have given it into the keeping of Sir Parsifal. Knowledge of its whereabouts was then lost, so that knights and heroes make it the object of long and fruitless quests.

The second cycle of romance has to do with Charlemagne, and is mostly in the form of translations from French literature.

The third, or classic cycle, relates to the great ones of ancient times, presented in the role of chivalry. These embrace stories of Alexander the Great, the Aeneid, and the Trojan war. During this period there were two classes of songs in Germany; the minstrelsy, most in favor with the nobility; and the old ballads, which were most popular with the people. The latter were gradually collected by different poets of the time, especially by Wolfram of Eschenbach and put into epic verse, in which form they have come down to us as the Heldenbuch (or book of heroes), and the Nibelungen−lied.

The Heldenbuch relates the deeds of Theodoric and Attila and the outpouring of the Goths into the Roman Empire. In the Nibelungen−lied the hero is Siegfried, the Achilles of the North, the embodiment of beauty, courage and virtue. The same personages are met with in these German legends, as in the Scandinavian mythology, only in the latter they take on a more godlike form. The German Brunhild, in the Scandinavian story becomes a Valkyriur.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed the decline of the romanticists, the loss of most of the Southern culture, and all the literature of this time is at a low ebb, partly owing to the wars of the Germans against the Huns.

The fourteenth century was productive of one class of literature that was common to all Europe; namely, simple and humorous fables and satires. "Reynard the Fox" was one of the earliest of these fables, and remained a great favorite with the Germans, being finally immortalized by Goethe. The same author has made us familiar with a personage who figures in an interesting legend of the fifteenth century. Doctor Faust, or Faustus, is a magician who by unlawful arts gains a mastery over nature. This legend became the foundation of a number of stories and dramas, and was put into verse by Christopher Marlowe, the English dramatist.

The end of the sixteenth century saw a craze for Latin in Germany. The national tongue was neglected and national poetry was translated into Latin verse. German poets wrote in the same classic language, and the university lectures were all delivered in the same tongue. The seventeenth century saw the Thirty Years' War, during which all literary activity was completely paralyzed, and in the course of these thirty years a whole generation, especially among the lower classes, had grown up unable either to read or write. But after the Treaty of Westphalia matters began to improve, and a desire to cultivate the native language awoke. In 1688 German superseded Latin in the universities. Novels were published; and about this time appeared a German translation of Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe" that became very popular. Poets wrote plays in the style of Terence, or copied English models; and even in the present day the Germans recall with pride the fact that the Shakespearean plays were appreciated by them during and after the Elizabethan age much more than they were by the English Nation.

Science under Leibnitz also began to take shape in this century, while Opitz wrote operas in imitation of the Italian style; and translations from the Italian Marini came into vogue. In the eighteenth century arose the Saxonic and Swiss schools of literature, neither of which was devoted to national works. Gottsched, the founder and imitator of French standards in art and poetry, is known as the leader in the Saxonic school at Leipsic, and an advocate of classical poetry.

Bodmer cultivated the English style, and retired to Switzerland with his friends, where they founded the Swiss school. The English lyric and elegiac poets had a wonderful influence in Germany. The followers of this school who were, or pretended to be, poets, began to write "Seasons" in imitation of Thomson; and the novels of the time were full of shepherds and shepherdesses. The craze spread to France, where the French Court took up the fad of living in rustic lodges, and Marie Antoinette posed as a shepherdess tending sheep. Each of these poets had numerous followers, of whom Rambler is known as the German Horace.

Frederick the Great preferred French works, and no one seems to have thought of starting a German school except Klopstock, who stands almost alone in the literature of his time and country. A man of lofty ideals, he believed that Christianity on the one hand and Gothic mythology on the other, should be the chief elements in all new European poetry and inspiration. Had he been encouraged by the German Court he would have been as powerful for good in German literature during the eighteenth century, as Voltaire was powerful for evil in France. Wielland, a friend of Klopstock, and a romantic poet, might have been the German Ariosto had he not abandoned poetry for prose. He tried to copy the Greek, in which he failed to excel. During this conflict in Germany between the French and English school, German literature was much influenced by Macpherson's Ossian, and Scotch

names are found in a great many German works of this period. The literature of Germany attained its highest beauty and finish in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and its people may well be proud of the splendid names that adorn that period. The Gottingen School, which embraced Goethe and Schiller, includes love, philosophy and the classics for its theme, with a touch of the bucolic, modelled after Virgil, as in the "Louise" of Voss. But it remained for the Romantic School, founded by Novalis, the two Schlegels and Tieck, to oppose the study of the classic antique on the ground that it killed all native originality and power. They turned to the Middle Ages, and drew from its rich stores all that was noblest and best. The lays of the Minnesingers were revived—the true German spirit was cultivated, and the romantic German imagination responded readily, so that during the dark period of the French invasion, the national feeling was preserved pure and untouched by means of these stirring and patriotic songs of the past.

About the same time as the advent of the Romanticists in Germany appeared Walpole's "Castle of Otranto" in England, which is supposed to belong to the same school of literature and to have been influenced by the German. Scott was also numbered in this class; and it is from these old German legends of the Minnesingers that Richard Wagner has drawn the material for Lohengrin, Parsifal, and others of his magnificent operas. In one department German scholars have attained a high standard, and that is as historians of ancient classical literature.

Their researches into the language, religion, philosophy, social economy, arts and sciences of ancient nations, has brought to light much for which the student of literature will always be their debtor.

# LATIN LITERATURE AND THE REFORMATION.

It has been said that the literati of the Middle Ages—the monks and schoolmen—sought to keep the people in ignorance by writing in Latin. Those who so think can ill have studied the trend of events in Europe for several hundred years before the Reformation, or its bearing on literature.

After the fall of the Roman Empire vast hordes of barbarians invaded Europe. In every country the language was in a state of transition. One nation often spoke two or three different dialects according to locality. In England the Gaelic, Anglo−Saxon, the Cymric (or Welsh) and the Norman−French all had their day. Under these circumstances it was impossible to have a literature in the language of the people until, in the course of time, the national languages were formed, and during this period of transition the Latin was the language of literature, the one medium of communication between the literati of different countries; and had it not been for the preservation of learning in the cloisters during these ages, all knowledge, and literature, and even Christianity itself, would have been lost. The monks, therefore, deserve more credit than is usually meted out to them by hasty or superficial critics.

In the earliest ages Ireland was the seat of the greatest learning in Europe. While England was still plunged in barbarism, and France and Germany could boast of no cultivation, Ireland was full of monasteries where learned men disseminated knowledge. The Latin language thus became a means for preserving the records of history, and it has also been a treasure house of stories, furnishing material for much of the poetry of Europe. One of these legends gave Scott the story of the combat between Marmion and the Spectre Knight.

It has been said that the Ancients did not know how to hold converse with nature, and that little or no sign of it can be found in their writings. Matthew Arnold has traced to a Celtic source the sympathy with, and deep communing with nature that first appeared among European poets. Under the patronage of Charlemagne the cloisters and brotherhoods became even more learned and cultivated than they had been before. Whatever the people knew of tilling the soil, of the arts of civilization, and of the truths of religion, they learned from the monks. By their influence States were rendered more secure, and it is to the monks alone that Western Europe is indebted for the superiority she attained over the Byzantines on the one hand (who were possessed of far more hereditary knowledge than she), and over the Arabs on the other, who had the advantage of eternal power. The cloisters were either the abode, or the educators, of such men as the Venerable Bede, Lanfranc and Anselm, Duns Scotius, William of Malmesbury, Geoffrey of Monmouth (who preserved the legends of Arthur, of King Lear, and Cymbeline), of Geraldus Cambrensis, of St. Thomas a Kempis, of Matthew Paris, a Benedictine monk, and of Roger Bacon, a Franciscan friar, who came very near guessing several important truths which have since been made known to the world by later scholars.

The Bible was protected and cherished from age to age in these cloisters, where it was, in fact, preserved solely by the labors of the monks, who translated it by hand, with illuminated border and text. When a new religious house was opened, it would obtain from some older monastery a copy of one of these priceless copies of the Sacred Scriptures; and then this new house in its turn, would set to work to multiply the number of Bibles, through the labor of its monks and brothers.

The German translation of the Bible was made in classic High Dutch, and many later writers have fashioned their style from it, although modern scholars, Catholic and Protestant, have found many faults in it, especially whole passages, wherein Luther has erred. This craze for High Dutch caused the historians of both Denmark and Sweden to utter a vigorous protest against the influx of High Dutch literature into their respective countries in the sixteenth century. They averred it was ruining the native language and literature; but, in spite of this, Lutheranism got a firm foothold in both these nations.

In the sixteenth century the poetry of all Southern Europe was affected by the upheaval caused by Luther and his teachings, while in the Northern countries it was even worse; for, as a great German author (von Schlegel), has said:

"The old creed could not be driven into contempt without carrying along with it a variety of images, allusions, poetic traditions and legends, and modes of composition, all more or less connected with the old faith."

The struggle that we can trace (in all the works Luther has left) of his own internal conflict between light and

darkness, faith and passion, God and himself, is a type and indication of what took place in literature during the Reformation, when the old was in opposition to the new.

# SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY.

Eighteenth century philosophy in France, Germany and England was a very different thing from the philosophy of the Ancients. The latter, says a profound German writer, "recognized in time and space an endless theatre for the display of the eternal, and of the living pulsation of eternal love. By the contemplation of such things, however imperfect, the natural, even the merely sensible man, was affected by a stupendous feeling of admiration, well calculated to prepare the way for religious thoughts. It extended and ennobled his soul to thus regard the past, present, and future."

French philosophy took its rise in the seventeenth century, but the philosophers of that age—Descartes, Bayle and others— assumed the soul of man to be the starting point in all investigations of physical science. The eighteenth century philosophers went a step further and rejected all idea of God and the soul. Voltaire, De Montesquieu, D'Holbach, D'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius and the Abbe Raynal, are the chief minds who shaped the thought of France in the eighteenth century, and by their cynicism, sensuality, and contempt for law and order, helped to pave the war for the horrors of the French Revolution. What they offered to the world the lower classes could only grasp in its most material sense, and they wrested it indeed to their own, and to others, destruction.

Voltaire, Diderot, D'Holbach and their school in France, with Hume, Bolingbroke and Gibbon in England, formed a coterie whose desire it was to edit a vast encyclopaedia, giving the latest discoveries, in philosophy and science in particular, and in literature in general. These men became known as the Encyclopaedists, and their history is fully set forth by Condillac. They rejected all divine revelation and taught that all religious belief was the working of a disordered mind, and that physical sensibility is the origin of all our thoughts. Alternately gross or flippant, or else both, the French philosophers offered nothing pure or elevating in philosophic thought. Their teaching spread to England, where the philosophy of the eighteenth century, less gross than the French, is chiefly distinguished for being cold and indifferent, rather than actively opposed, to religion. Hume is a type of the class of thinkers whom we find uncertain and unworthy of confidence. The histories of Hume, Robertson and Gibbon are the offspring of this degraded material philosophy of the eighteenth century. They surpassed the histories of other nations in comprehensiveness and power, and became standard works in France and Germany, but in all of them we can trace a lack of true philosophy, due to the blighting influence of the eighteenth century skepticism; for, as the greatest minds, in which Christianity and science are blended, have agreed—"without some reasonable and due idea of the destiny and end of man, it is impossible to form just and consistent opinions on the progress of events, and the development and fortunes of nations. History stripped of philosophy becomes simply a lifeless heap of useless materials, without either inward unity, right purpose, or worthy result; while philosophy severed from history results in a disturbed existence of different sects, allied to formality."

The originator of English philosophy was John Locke, whose teachings were closely allied to the sensual philosophy of the French. It remained for the Scottish school under Thomas Reid to combat both the sensualistic philosophy of Voltaire and Locke, and the skepticism of Hume. Reid was a sincere lover of truth, a man of lofty character, and his philosophy, such as it is, is the purest that can be found, more akin to the profound reasoning of Plato.

In Italy, during the eighteenth century, the theory that experience is the only ground of knowledge, as taught by Locke and Condillac, gained some followers; but none of them were men of any great influence. Gallupi in the beginning of the nineteenth century endeavored to reform this philosophy; others took up his work, and the result was a change of thought similar to that brought about by Reid in England and Scotland.

The earlier German philosophers were influenced by the grosser forms of the science, as found in Locke and Helvetius. Leibnitz and Wolf taught pure Idealism, as did Bishop Berkeley in England. It remained for Kant to create a new era in modern philosophy. His system vas what has become known as the Rationalistic, or what we can know by pure reason. Kant was followed by Lessing, Herder, Hegel, Fichte, and a host of others.

These German philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have had a powerful influence in shaping literature in England, France, Denmark, Sweden and America. The mystic and profound German mind has often been led astray; but its intellectual strength cannot be questioned. Schelling was the author of theories in philosophy that have been adopted and imitated by both Coleridge and Wordsworth, while Van Hartmann teaches

that there is but one last principle of philosophy, known by Spinoza as substance, by Fichte as the absolute I., by Plato and Hegel as the absolute Idea, by Schopenhauer as Will, and by himself as a blind, impersonal, unconscious, all−pervading Will and Idea, independent of brain, and in its essence purely spiritual, and he taught that there could be no peace for man's heart or intellect until religion, philosophy and science were recognized as one root, stem and leaves all of the same living tree.

It is curious to trace how these various philosophies, recognized by Van Hartmann under different names to be one, can be merged into the sublime Christian philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, who taught that religion, philosophy and science were indeed one—root, stem and leaves of the one life−giving tree, which is God.

All that is deepest and most profound is to be found in this modern German philosophy, which is diametrically opposed to the flippant and sensual philosophy of the Voltarian school. However far the German philosophers are from true philosophy as seen in the light of Christian truth, they command a respect as earnest thinkers and workers, which it is impossible to accord the eighteenth century French school.

# ENGLISH.

No country in the beginning owed so much to the language and literature of other nations as the English.

Anglo−Saxon, Latin, Norman−French, Cymric and Gaelic have all been moulded into its literature.

Three periods stand out in its history—the first beginning with the end of the Roman occupation, to the Norman conquest—this includes the literature of the Celtic, Latin and Anglo−Saxon tongues. The second from the Norman conquest to the time of Henry VIII, embracing the literature of the Norman−French, the Latin and Anglo−Saxon; the gradual evolution of the Anglo−Saxon into English; and the literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The third period includes the Reformation, and the golden age of Elizabethan literature; followed by the Restoration, Revolution, and the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Another division is called the Old English, Early English, and Middle English. The latter was used by Chaucer, and with a little care in reading can readily be understood by any educated person at the present day, though it contains many words nationalized from the French. It is a curious fact that the Anglo−Saxons, who in the present day, through their descendants, the English, have the strongest national life and literature, cannot boast of such a treasure house of ancient literature as is possessed by the Irish and Welsh.

Ireland has its bardic songs and historical legends older than the ninth century, at which time appeared the "Psalter of Cashel," which has come down to the present day.

There are also prose chronicles, said to be the outcome of others of a still earlier period, and which give a contemporary history of the country in the Gaelic language of the fifth century. There is no other modern nation in Europe that can point to such a literary past. The Scotch Celts had early metrical verse, of which the Ossian, wherein is related the heroic deeds of Fingal, was supposed to have been sung by all the ancient Celtic bards. In the eighteenth century, Macpherson, a Scotchman, found some of these poems sung in the Highlands of Scotland; and, making a careful study of them, he translated all he could find from the Gaelic into English, and gave them to the world. At the time of publication, in 1762, their authenticity was questioned, and even at the present day scholars are divided in their opinion as to their genuineness. The literature of the Cymric Celts, the early inhabitants of Britain, has given us the glorious legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. All the bardic songs refer to this mighty prince, who resisted the Saxon invaders, and whose deeds were sung by all the Welsh Britons. Some of these people took refuge in France, and gradually the fame of their legends spread all over Europe, and were eagerly seized upon and rendered into song, by the chivalric poets of all countries. From these tales Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth century compiled a Latin historical work of Britain, while in later times Tennyson in England, and Richard Wagner in Germany, have made the deeds of Arthur and his Knights the theme of some of their most magnificent creations.

Other ancient Welsh writings are still extant, among them the Triads, which is a work that has come down from primitive times. It comprises a collection of historical and mythological maxims, traditions, theological doctrines, and rules for constructing verse.

The Mabinogi, or "Tales of Youth," are old Welsh romances similar to the Norse Sagas, which are supposed by critics to date from a very rude and early age.

The Anglo−Saxon is very different from these ancient literatures. It has no legends or romances, no national themes, and its early prose and verse were written more in the style of religious narrative, and to give practical information, than to amuse.

The poems of Beowulf, a thorough Norse Saga, embodies the doings of the Anglo−Saxons before they emigrated to England, and must have been written long before they set foot on English soil. Older than Beowulf is the lyric poem of Widsith, which has some historical interest as depicting the doings of kings, princes and warriors. It contains traces of the epic, which in Beowulf, whose English poem is next in point of time, is more markedly developed.

During the fifth and sixth centuries the Germanic tribes who emigrated to Britain brought with them a heathen literature. The oldest fragment now extant are the Hexenspruche and the Charms. They have elements of Christian teaching in them, which would seem to imply that the Church tried to give them a Christian setting. In some

respects they resemble the old Sanskrit, and are supposed to be among the earliest examples of lyric poetry in England.

Alfred the Great improved the Anglo−Saxon prose and soon after his time a translation of the Bible in that language was made, forming the second known copy in a national language, the first being the Moeso−Gothic of Bishop Ulphilus. The Saxon Chronicles, dating from the time of Alfred to 1154 were copies of the Latin Chronicles kept in the monasteries.

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw the age of the Crusades, which added a new impulse to learning through the co−mingling of different races. French poetry was translated into English, which, in the thirteenth century, in its evolution from the Anglo−Saxon became a fixed language. Classical learning in this age was generally diffused through the schoolmen, of whom Lanfranc, Anselm, John of Salisbury, Duns Scotius, William of Malmesbury, and other great names of this period, mentioned elsewhere, are instances.

In the thirteenth century appeared also the Gesta Romanorum, a collection of fables, traditions, and various pictures of society, changing with the different countries that the stories dealt with. The romance of Apollonius in this collection gave Chaucer the plots for two or three of his tales, and furnished Cowers with the theme for most of his celebrated poem, the Confessio Amantis. This poem, in its turn, suggested to Shakespeare the outlines for his characters of Pericles, Prince of Tyre, and the Merchant of Venice. Other and less celebrated works are also taken from the Gesta Romanorum.

After the accession of the Norman kings of England, the chief literary works in England for two centuries are those of the Norman poets. Wace in the twelfth century wrote in French his "Brut d'Angleterre." Brutus was the mythical son of Aeneas, and the founder of Britain. The Britons were settled in Cornwall, Wales and Bretagne, and were distinguished for traditionary legends, which had been collected by Godfrey of Monmouth in 1138. They formed the groundwork for Wace's poem, which was written in 1160, and from that time proved to be an inexhaustible treasury from which romantic writers of fiction drew their materials.

From this source Shakespeare obtained King Lear; Sackville found his Ferrex and Porrex; and Milton and other poets are also indebted to these legends. They furnished, also, the romances of chivalry for the English Court, and have had an effect on English poetry that can be seen even in the present day. The six romances of the British cycle, celebrating Arthur, his Knights, and the Round Table, were written in the last part of the twelfth century, at the instigation of Henry II. They were the work of Englishmen; but were composed in French, and from them the poets of France fashioned a number of metrical romances.

Geoffrey Chaucer in the fourteenth century borrowed freely from French, Latin and Italian works. The comic Fabliaux and the allegorical poetry of the Trouveres and Troubadours furnished him with many of his incidents and characters. The Romance of the Rose was taken from a French poem of the thirteenth century.

Troilus and Cressida is regarded as a translation from Boccaccio, and Chaucer's Legend of Good Women is founded on Ovid's Epistles. John Lydgate, a Benedictine monk in the fifteenth century, wrote poetry in imitation of Chaucer, taking his ideas from the Gesta Romanorum, while Thomas Mallory, a priest in the time of Edward IV, has given us one of the best specimens of old English in the romantic prose fiction of Morte d'Arthur, in which the author has told in one tale the whole history of the Round Table.

The "Bruce" of the Scotch John Barbour in the same century, gives the adventures of King Robert, from which Sir Walter Scott has drawn largely for his "Lord of the Isles."

The close of the fifteenth century saw a passion develop for Scotch poetry, which speedily became the fashion. Henry the Minstrel, or Blind Harry, wrote his "Wallace," which is full of picturesque incident and passionate fervor.

Robert Henryson wrote his Robin and Makyne, a charming pastoral, which has come down to us in Percy's Reliques.

Gavin Douglas, Scotch Bishop of Dunkeld in the beginning of the sixteenth century, translated the Aeneid into English. This is the earliest known attempt in the British Isles to render classical poetry into the national language.

In the sixteenth century Erasmus gave a new impulse in England to the study of Latin and Greek, and Sir Thomas More in his "Utopia" (wherein he imagines an ideal commonwealth with community of property), unconsciously gave birth to a word (utopia), which has ever since been used to designate the ideally impossible.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, in the same century made a translation of the Aeneid and wrote sonnets and

lyrical poems. The sonnet he borrowed from Petrarch, giving it the amatory tone common to the Italians. He also took from the Italian poets the blank verse of his Aeneid, a style in which the best poetry of England has since been written.

The genius of John Milton has been greatly hampered by the self−inflicted laws under which he labored, conditions which did not affect Dante and Tasso, who were his models; for Milton denied in a great measure the use of history, tradition and symbolism. Of this defect he was sensible, so he tried to make amends for it by borrowing fables and allegories out of the Koran and Talmud. English poetry has inclined more to the style of Milton than to that of Spenser, who was thoroughly embued with the romantic spirit of the Teutons and the Troubadours, though, like Milton, he was influenced by Tasso; and unlike him, by Ariosto. His Faerie Queene, Gloriana, is supposed to be the beloved of the courtly Arthur of the British legends.

The English poets of the Elizabethan age were under deep obligations to the Italian poets, especially Tasso; and this is particularly true of Spenser, many critics think his eighty−first sonnet is almost a literal translation of Tasso. Be that as it may, the obligations of many English poets of the age to the Italians, is unmistakable.

After the Puritan period the English language and literature was strongly influenced by the French, and in both Pope and Addison there is a marked leaning toward French poetry. Pope's translation of Homer while it lacks the simple majesty and naturalness of the original (a trait which Bryant in the nineteenth century happily caught), nevertheless gave to the English world the opportunity to become somewhat acquainted with the incomparable poet of antiquity.

Thomson's descriptive poetry of nature found many imitators in Germany and France, and a taste for outdoor life and simplicity became the rage, so that some years after the author of the "Castle of Indolence" had passed away, Marie Antoinette in her rustic bower, "Little Trianon," pretended to like to keep sheep and pose as a shepherdess, as has been said elsewhere.

Percy's Reliques of ancient English poetry, in 1765 opened a storehouse of the fine old English ballads, which speedily became popular through the patronage of Scott, who made them his textbook for a variety of subjects. These poems, with Macpherson's "Fingal" introduced a new school of poetry into England. The originals of Scott were these romances of chivalry, and even Byron has not disdained to follow the same trend in the pilgrimage of his "Childe Harold." The nineteenth century poets and novelists do not seem to have borrowed especially from any foreign element; but in history Niebuhr's researches in Germany have greatly influenced Arnold in his "Roman History." The close of the nineteenth century and opening of the twentieth is chiefly remarkable for the interdependence of literature through the magazines and reviews. Translations of any striking or brilliant articles are immediately made, and appear in the magazines of different countries almost as soon as the originals, so that the literature of the future bids fair to become more cosmopolitan, and perhaps less strongly directed by racial and social influence than in the past.

And yet—in studying the literature of ancient and modern times—we are struck by the unity in diversity of its history, just as a world−wide traveller comes to see the similarity of nature everywhere. In literature strange analogies occur in ages and races remote from each other, as, when the mother in the old North country Scotch ballad sings to her child, and says:

"The wild wind is ravin,' thy minnies heart's sair, The wild wind is ravin,' but ye dinna care."

And we find nearly the same verse in the song of Danae to the infant Perseus:

"The salt spume that is blown o'er thy locks, Thou heedst not, nor the roar of the gale; Sleep babe, sleep the sea, And sleep my sea of trouble."

There is also the story of the Greek child who in ancient times sang nearly the same invocation for fair weather that we used in our nursery days, when, with noses flattened against the window pane, we uttered our sing−song:

"Rain, rain, go to Spain."

And in blindman's buff, perhaps the most ancient of games, we have words that have come down from remote times. The blindfolded one says:

"I go a−hunting a brassy fly."

To which the others answer:

"A−hunting thou goest; but shalt not come nigh."

And there are the marvellous stories of the Giant Killer, and the wonders of Puss in Boots and Cinderella,

which have descended to us from that vast cloud−country of bygone ages; that dreamland of fairy imagery, which is as real to the little maid in the twentieth century as it was to her young sisters in the shadow of the Pyramids, on the banks of the Tiber and the Ganges, in the neighborhood of solemn Druid Temples, or among the fjords and floes of the far−off Icelandic country, in centuries long since gone by.